

Trinity United Methodist Church



2023 Capital Campaign Devotional

Trinity United Methodist Church members and friends:

Trinity has served its members and community for over 70 years! Generations of people grow in their faith together, raise children together, and experience the joys and tears of life together within the walls of Trinity. The Trinity Preschool and Parents' Morning Out Program serve and educate generations of children, and community groups use our facility for meeting spaces. Programs like Upward Basketball and Cheerleading fill our rooms with excited children and families. Our church is a well-used and well-loved space for everyone!

We all want Trinity to be a place for spiritual growth for generations to come. In order to do that, we need a welcoming and comfortable place for children and families to interact while they learn and grow in faith and discover what makes the congregation and church such an essential part of our lives. Over the past few weeks, you learned details about how the capital campaign will make this possible in the future.

There are many aspects of this campaign--practical, generational, aspirational--but prayer and seeking God's inspiration and guidance for our church is central to it, since that is central to all that we do at Trinity. In the following pages, you will find scripture passages focusing on generosity along with the reflections of Trinity Church and Preschool representatives. Their thoughts collectively reveal the love, support, community, education, and relationships with Christ that so many find through Trinity. We hope that these "voices" will resonate with you and remind you of your own Trinity story, allowing you to contemplate what Trinity has done for you and how you might participate in our campaign. This completed devotional will support *Building Generations Together* by helping create a prayerful commitment to our future together.

We recommend that you begin reading this collection of devotions on Sunday, October 29, and read an individual devotion each day, leading up to Commitment Sunday on November 19. It is our hope that these devotions will serve as a useful resource as you prayerfully consider your role and participation in this campaign for our church and for our future generations.

Blessings,

Building Generations Together Capital Campaign Prayer Team

Mike McCullough, Joseph Thompson, and Mary-Holland Thompson

A message from our pastor:

Dear Trinity,

I am so excited about the improvements coming to Trinity United Methodist Church that this capital campaign will enable to happen. I know many already give what is comfortable to the operating and missional budget of the church, and I appreciate all of it. I know asking for additional support is asking a lot. This extra giving will allow Trinity to continue to be what it needs to be for the community around us today and into the future. In my experience, God finds a way. In my study of Scripture, God is abundant and generous beyond our comprehension.

Please use this guide during our campaign to help focus and center on what God has done, is doing, and will do. Let us all find a way to let God inspire and lead us, likely with a bit of sacrifice, to build generations together.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Brian

Day 1: Sunday, October 29

James 1:17

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

This verse is part of a larger passage in the Book of James that discusses the trials, temptations, and importance of faith as we all walk in this journey of life on earth. The verse emphasizes that all good things in our lives, whether they be talents, blessings, or other forms of goodness, come from God. And, unlike the natural world, where shadows change with the movement of the sun or light sources, God is unchanging and constant. This attribute of God is often referred to as His Immutability and signifies that His character, love, and promises remain steadfast and reliable. Trinity United Methodist Church has reflected God's promise to the Peele family since we joined the church in 1985.

The Trinity Christian family has been the foundation of our faith for almost 40 years. Both of our children were baptized at this special place and later worshipped here. Sandy walked our daughter Ashley down the aisle of Trinity when she was married. In this sanctuary we witnessed four grandchildren become baptized in the name of Christ. It lifts our hearts to witness Ashley continue to worship and serve God here in such roles as Trinity Kids Camp Leader, member of the Church Council, Children's Council and Church Conference Representative.

This generational love of Christ continues when our granddaughter Eliza reads scripture at the 9:00 service or when we sit on pins and needles wondering what her brother Johnny might say or do during Jen William's Children Moments portion of the service.

Some of our very closest friends are members of the former Family Focus Sunday School Class, now called Ordinary People. With the support of God and each other, we have better coped with trials of the times, ranging from parenthood, the work place, aging parents, and life-threatening illnesses. Trinity has been that immutable force of love and foundation of faith for us. Never wavering.

Yes, in some modest ways, we have tried to give back our gifts and talents to Trinity. Such roles as holding the position of Staff Parrish Chair, teaching preschool and Sunday school classes, chairing Stewardship and Finance Committees, and serving on the Trinity Foundation are some ways we have tried to give back. However, we simply think it impossible to return to God all He has given and blessed us with being part of the Trinity United Methodist Church family.

We chose to give to the Building Generations Together Campaign in hopes that this amazing entity and gift from God called Trinity can serve generations to come.

Sandy and Elaine Peele

Day 2: Monday, October 30

Matthew 6:19-21

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

We came to Trinity UMC in the early 1980s and one of our primary reasons was to expose our two young sons to a church culture that had programs not only designed to further adult development, but one that also prioritized the future faith development of the children of the church. In 1987 we were blessed with another son and all three of our boys were molded throughout the years by faithful and dedicated teachers like the Burches, Pam Rutledge, the Hetzels, Beanie Kelley and Forrest White, just to name a few. There have been many others as well. We are so grateful to those devoted Christian mentors who have contributed to the faith foundation that today continues to drive our three adult sons and four grandsons.

We say our “Thank Yous” every day to God for leading us to Trinity UMC and we are grateful for these leaders who are examples of those who have stored up treasures in heaven for themselves and, hopefully, for those whose lives they have touched. I know we are not alone in this gratitude as evidenced by the early gift giving and generosity already experienced in our current Capital Campaign.

In order for us to continue offering quality programming and the energetic enthusiasm that propels our future as a faith community, it is vital for us to maintain the efficiency of our church, both physically and spiritually. Therefore, we encourage all to prayerfully consider a generous contribution to the Capital Campaign to continue our growth in doing God’s work through the important teachings of Jesus Christ found throughout our inviting worship and learning spaces.

Brad and Jan Booker

Day 3: Tuesday, October 31

Proverbs 10:22

The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, without painful toil for it.

In Proverbs 10, King Solomon provides a series of antithetical comparisons, focusing on the contrast between the righteous vs. the wicked – specifically how the righteous are wise, are hard workers and show love, whereas the wicked are lazy and foolish and practice hate.

Today's verse – “The Lord's blessing makes a person rich, and no trouble is added to it” (Common English Bible) – does not offer a direct contrast like many other verses in Proverbs 10, but in the context of this chapter, Solomon invites us to consider this: the righteous and the wicked can both attain riches, but from where does that wealth come, how is that wealth used and can one be burdened by it? For those seeking righteousness, Solomon knows that that our wealth and riches come from God. When we rejoice that God's blessings make us wealthy, we receive the additional comfort that “no trouble is added it” – God's riches don't come with strings attached.

At Trinity, we, as a family and as a congregation, are also wealthy – God's blessings abound. Given we are a family with younger children, our Trinity experience at the moment revolves around the Kid's Ministry. For our family, we might as well apply the Capital Campaign's tagline of “Building Generations Together” as the tagline for Trinity's Kid's Ministry. Our 3 children are so lucky to have a team – of all ages and generations – that makes learning about the stories of Jesus, Moses, Daniel and more so exciting and fun on a weekly basis (well, and earning the opportunity to dig into Ms. Jen's candy stash helps too!). Alas, this is a devotion centered around a capital campaign, so for us, we are inspired by so many at Trinity because we both want a church home that can consistently help increase the riches of our children's spiritual piggy bank. So, as you and your family consider being a part of the Building Generations Together campaign, perhaps you will be inspired by today's verse and the reminder that “every good and perfect gift is from above” (first half of James 1:17).

Kyle and Jordan Utley

Day 4: Wednesday, November 1

Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

My husband, Joe, and I joined Trinity in 1980. We probably joined mostly so our daughter, Kate, could be brought up in a wonderful Christian atmosphere. And she was. But I believe John Wesley said to practice faith until you have it. Well, we are still working, but we have had great teachers along the way like Bill McClure, Doug Dillard, John Peters, and not just those with “titles.” Paul says, “Rejoice,” again I say, “rejoice.” I say “rejoice” when I look around the building and see members and current staff at Trinity happily --no, joyously-- giving of their time to make our church better. They are great Christian examples. Teachers are all around us. Until I volunteered two summers ago at Kids Camp, I had no idea how many people were needed or how much fun it could be! Some of you have heard this, but I have a friend that always reminded me, “You are as young as you’ll ever be!” Then I think, “Yes, June, that’s right!” So, I will keep decorating the kid’s rooms, hoping to bring the Bible alive. I feel at “peace” when I am in Trinity. I am surrounded by my “brothers and sisters in Christ”. What a comfort! In this Philippians verse, we are reminded that we have received much. Joe and I have gained so much from what we have learned, received, or heard at Trinity that we must give back generously.

Bonnie Andrews

Day 5: Thursday, November 2

Genesis 12:1-2

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."

The Genesis story of Abram's calling from his pagan past to a new life in the promised land involved three elements:

- Leaving the past behind.
- Accepting God's blessing
- Being a blessing to others

In our own life, Gale and I grew up in rural communities near the Ohio River in western Kentucky. After we married, we lived and worked without a connection to a faith community for many years. Through a series of events, we decided to move to Richmond. As in the Bible story of Abraham and Sarah, Gale and I were blessed late in life with the opportunity to raise two boys. It was then that we began to understand the need of our family to worship God.

We were earnestly seeking a strong and supportive community where we and the boys could grow our faith. Eventually, God led us to Trinity and we became members. Trinity now nurtures us and blesses us in so many ways that we are eager to be a blessing to others, as other families are a blessing to us. We know Trinity needs to maintain a meeting place for worship, study, service and so much more, and we are honored to be able to contribute financially to assure that we all are able to continue to meet and to grow our faith community.

Jonathan and Gale Hawes

Day 6: Friday, November 3

Luke 21:1-4

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Real talk for a moment - this scripture can be a tough one. Is God asking us to give Him all we have to live on? Yikes! I don't think I could ever live up to the example of the poor widow giving her two very small copper coins. It's tempting to stop there and concede defeat.

But I think there's another way to look at this. Maybe God isn't trying to make this a competition. Maybe God isn't tallying up a score - poor widow, many points; rich, fewer points. Maybe God delights in *everyone* giving their gifts, whether it's out of wealth or poverty...or (for most of us) somewhere in between.

This Capital Campaign is an opportunity to delight God. An opportunity to give Him our gifts. Instead of us comparing ourselves to the poor widow (or pew neighbor) and wondering if we're doing enough, my hope is that we remember that God welcomes the gifts of everyone. May you find joy in delighting God through your gifts.

Sarah Hall

Day 7: Saturday, November 4

Acts 4:33-37

With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need. Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

My 5-year-old granddaughter always reminds her two older brothers that "sharing is caring". In my opinion, these are very noble words to live by. Sharing, by definition, means giving a portion of something to another or others. The Bible verse from Acts 4 above tells us that God's grace was so abundant that no one among them was needy. That is because those that could, shared what they had with others; their land, their houses, or whatever they could sell to "put the money at the apostles' feet." Just imagine a world where everyone shared and no one was needy! How can you share? You can share your treasures by giving, your time by volunteering, and your talents by answering a call to serve. These are ways to share that show Trinity that you care.

Jan Benton

Day 8: Sunday, November 5

Deuteronomy 8:18

But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

As I read this passage, I am reminded that not only everything we **have** comes from God but that everything we **can do** comes from God. It helps me to avoid the mistaken conclusion that we alone are responsible for the results of our work, and reminds me to have gratitude and thankfulness to God who provides us the tools for this outcome, just as God has done for our ancestors before us.

My Trinity “ancestors” have clearly been very aware of this gift from God, based on the many things they have done to support and enable our church over the years. I think about our Trinity ancestors who have been so generous with their time and talents in their efforts to serve our community and world and their efforts to teach and lead our kids and students. I also think about our Trinity ancestors when I think about our church building, our beautiful sanctuary, Trinity Hall and the Welcome Center. Trinity stands on the shoulders of their faith, generosity and foresight. I am so grateful for their previous gifts of time and service, as well as their past financial support of our church. And I am grateful that I now have the ability to remember the gifts that come from God, and support our church through acts of faithfulness and generosity.

Mike McCullough

Day 9: Monday, November 6

Hebrews 10:24

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

Hebrews 10:24 talks about loving and helping others with members of your church and community. As a new sixth grader in the IB program at Tuckahoe Middle School, I need to complete volunteer hours and have found great opportunities at Trinity. I have also been able to invite friends who probably wouldn't volunteer at Trinity on their own. Along with friends and family, I have enjoyed helping with Vacation Bible School, unloading pumpkins, handing out race packets for the Lara Teague Curry Memorial 5K, spending time in my mom's TUMC Preschool class, and I look forward to hosting a trunk at the Fall Festival.

Most recently, three of my friends from Tuckahoe Middle School helped me sell pumpkins at our pumpkin patch. We had the best time together and it was so fun to see little kids get excited about the pumpkins. We even played tag running around the pumpkins with some of the families. It was such a great time. Without the Trinity community, it would be much harder to find such fun and meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Being a member of the Trinity family gives all of us the resources and support we need to use our gifts together to make a difference. I have enjoyed being encouraged and encouraging others to share good deeds – thank you Trinity!

Eva Larkum

Day 10: Tuesday, November 7

Proverbs 16:3

Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.

At first glance, this passage may seem relatively light-hearted. “Commit to the Lord whatever you do” – does this mean literally everything, even picking up sticks or trash? Other translations use “works” instead of “do”, which implies more of a sense of calling. The fact is, the Christian journey (or calling) is never a straight path, but often a journey with many twists and turns, moments when you feel that you left the path long ago or forgot what the path even looks like. But God still has a calling for each of us, and this calling is often in stages at a time.

In my own journey, I can clearly see times that God called me from one chapter to the next—giving me just enough of a plan to move forward. I was called to ministry during college and felt that attending seminary was the next step in God’s plan; however, I had no idea what would come after graduating from seminary. I thought that various opportunities would be the next thing in God’s plan for me, but the doors remained shut. I took a temporary job which just so happened to be connected to the ministry that I would spend the next fourteen years working in—I of course had no idea about this connection when I took the temporary position.

Coming to Trinity a year ago was a more recent next step in God’s plan. Our daughter was the only child on a regular basis in our former church, and we knew that as she became older, it would be vitally important to find a church where she would have ample opportunities to grow in her faith. We found this opportunity in Trinity. This congregation is blessed to have a vibrant and active children and youth ministry—this fact alone makes Trinity extremely unique. Trinity truly is a church blessed to have a multigenerational congregation and a large number of long-time members.

As a relatively new member of Trinity, I am keenly aware that God is actively working with and among the people in this congregation. The excitement and anticipation of the unveiling of the plans God has in store is palatable, we don’t know where God will lead us yet, but Trinity is truly an amazing connecting point with its community. This is why I feel

compelled to give generously to the Building Generations Together Campaign, not just with money but more so with the time and talents God has blessed me with. Whatever God has planned next—let's commit to continue moving forward.

Sam Duenckel

Day 11: Wednesday, November 8

Luke 6:38

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

During my time here at Trinity United Methodist Church, I have been given multiple opportunities to grow, learn, and lead. When I was eleven years old, I noticed how much I enjoyed assisting the Burches' four-year-old Sunday school class. Here I am, twelve years later as the Nursery Coordinator. As I read this passage, I am reminded of all of the countless ways Trinity has given to me. The Trinity family has supported me through my basketball journey as well as all of my surgeries. I am thankful now that I finally get to give back in some small way and I encourage you to do the same. I am blessed to be a part of this community of faith.

Abby Oguich

Day 12: Thursday, November 9

Hebrews 13:2

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

When I think about hospitality, I think of my mother. She has always created a home, not a house. When I was a kid, we would always have company, and she would always do such a good job of making our home warm, inviting and welcoming. She did such a good job of this that we used to joke around in our family about how she used to clean the house before our housekeeper would come to clean our house. At Trinity, we do an amazing job doing this for our guests and visitors, because our people are so warm, inviting and welcoming, and our building is full of history and character that makes it very unique and easy to make people feel at home. I truly believe that our church's ability to grow this welcoming behavior for our community is limitless.

Gray Booker

Day 13: Friday, November 10

Deuteronomy 15:10

Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.

Generosity and compassion are the essence of this verse. God wants each of us to be generous and compassionate towards others. When we take care of others, He will take care of us. As Christians we are called to help others by giving and sharing. In this verse, we are instructed to give “without a grudging heart” and if we go about our lives like this God will take care of us too.

As I reflect on this scripture, I think of my time at Trinity United Methodist Preschool. It is a place where we welcome all children. Our motto is “every day should be a good day for a child!” Trinity United Methodist Preschool is that. It is a place where children, no matter their background, can come and be loved and nurtured. As the music teacher, I participate in monthly chapel with preschool children. I see their eyes open wide when entering the beautiful sanctuary. For many, it is the first exposure to church and God. As I give generously my talents to the children through music, we teach them the very basic message that “You are a child of God” and “God loves you all the time!” What a powerful message that children need to hear. “Yes, Jesus loves me.” I believe every child should know and feel that message.

Through Trinity United Methodist Preschool, I am able to serve and give to the community by teaching every child that God loves them. When the world can become so overwhelming and hard, these children have been taught that God loves them. God has blessed me with such a wonderful opportunity to share His message and His love with children. By giving generously, Trinity United Methodist Preschool can continue to be a welcoming, warm, loving environment where generations of children know God is always with them.

Kathy Josefiak

Day 14: Saturday, November 11

Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

In 2003, our son, Drew, was in the “Turtle” class in the Trinity Preschool. He was typically comfortable attending, though the tender hugs from Lynn Berry always helped as I stepped away to leave. Progressing to the “Rabbit” class, and even to the 3-year-old class, was a different story however. Though he could walk easily by then, I carried Drew into the building because he was so reluctant to go inside. While holding him, he often reached out and grabbed hold of a door frame to prevent me from getting him inside! Eventually, the kindness and patience of teachers paid off, and our preschool challenges subsided.

We then joined Trinity and began attending Sunday School. As a 4-year-old, Drew was in Anne and Bill Burch’s class. He quickly loved their teaching and lessons. Somehow, our child who was so obstinate about going inside Trinity came to enjoy it so much that, if we missed a Sunday, he would request the lesson handout from the Burches upon returning! Third grade Bibles, fourth grade with Mrs. Rutledge and Mrs. Dabney or Mrs. Toler at the piano, Wednesday Night Fellowship dinners, middle school with the Blackmons, Children’s Choir with Aunt Pat and Katie Berlin, hand chimes with Peggy Hart, the Christmas Pageant, and everything in between became incredibly formative for both Drew and our daughter, Amelia. They thrived on the lessons in Christianity and grew from the outpouring of love from everyone.

As they expanded their Trinity experience, they found opportunities at school for Christian engagement in middle and high school. Now in college, they participate in campus faith groups and found churches to attend away from home. Drew even enjoyed lunch with members of Wesley Memorial Methodist Church in England after worship while studying at Oxford! It is no doubt that Trinity and the wonderful people who give so much to our church inspire hope through Christian fellowship, education, and outreach, and in doing so, Trinity develops futures that are full of potential to offer the same to the next generation.

Mary-Holland and Joseph Thompson

Day 15: Sunday, November 12

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

The line “give thanks in all circumstances” makes me think about my first year of middle school and the challenges we students endured. Coming back from a year of virtual education, and then going to an entirely new school was not an ideal transition to sixth grade. When I started going to Youth Group, there were only a few other middle schoolers who regularly attended. Yet I kept coming back. And I came back the next year, and the year after that because our Youth Group is full of wonderful, kind, intelligent teens who welcome everyone of all ages with open hearts. I kept coming back because I wanted to have a place in that community. My evenings with the Youth Group community gave me a little bit of support to help me through the week, whether through a conversation, a meaningful lesson, or just a particularly fun game of manhunt! I was very thankful to have those moments of community and support during a challenging year, and I'm happy that I still have Youth Group to look forward to every Sunday.

Laurel Vernon

Day 16: Monday, November 13

Matthew 18:20

For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

Aren't there moments when you are in church when you just know that God is present? Maybe it's on Easter morning when we sing "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," or maybe it's in the quiet candlelight on Christmas Eve as we sing "Silent Night." Those moments give us chills and warmth at the same time. We believe, we are together, God is with us, and we feel it!

Yet, there are other times where we also know God is within Trinity. For us, it's been about how we first met -- at Trinity through Mary Virginia Manson and Nancy Coddington. It was knowing that Dr. Dillard was walking the halls of St. Mary's as we brought Mary Margaret into the world. We know God has walked with us as we raised both of our children. Their years in Trinity's Pre-School as well as Children and Youth activities were such a big part of their lives, to the point that Mary Margaret was married by Judy Oguich in Trinity's sanctuary.

Trinity is our family and our church home. We believe in Trinity and in its ability to serve generations to come. We believe that, with God with us, now is the time for us to build and prepare Trinity for the future. We are excited to feel God calling us to further God's kingdom!

Peggy and Bruce Watson

Day 17: Tuesday, November 14

Acts 20:35

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

“It is more blessed to give than to receive” in Acts 20:35 stood out to me because I have been able to relate to it in my life experiences, especially at Trinity. Through the giving of my time and talents over the years around Trinity -- audio/visual (A/V), Upward, Student Ministries, acolyting, VBS, children’s choir, Mission Kids, and more -- I have been blessed in many ways. A big blessing to me has come from my time doing the A/V on Sunday mornings. While doing this, I have matured spiritually; listening and relating to the sermons and becoming more engaged in church, as well as giving my time so other people have the opportunity to experience Trinity when they otherwise would not have been able. Recently we have been talking about “deep gladness” in Sunday School and how it lasts through both easy and hard times. I believe that the spiritual growth I’m getting through the gifts of my time and talents gives me this deep gladness. I hope others are receiving the same sort of thing I’m getting because of what I’m doing. I look forward to continuing to grow in the ways that I give and for the blessings to come. I see Trinity UMC playing a large role in that.

JC Brooks

Day 18: Wednesday, November 15

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

I feel very blessed to lead Trinity's Kids Ministry and do ministry alongside wonderful families and volunteers! There are many stories I could share about how Trinity's need is fulfilled by someone's special gifting; this is just one of those stories:

Kids Camp 2022 was our first Kids Camp after COVID. We had lots of kids signing up but didn't have the number of volunteers that we needed to accommodate all of our campers. I reached out to all of my personal contacts at Trinity, but we still needed more volunteers. As a last resort, I began searching for contacts in our church database that I could reach out to and see if they could participate. I began with "A" and worked my way down through a list I had put together. One of the women I texted reached back and told me that although she had never helped with a VBS before, she was in! My newest Kids Camp recruit was Bonnie Andrews! Bonnie was so creative the entire week of Kids Camp and did fun things with her crew! At the end of the week, she put together the display case that served as a great recap of what occurred over the week!

The curriculum that we use on Sunday mornings in our Kids Ministry includes a rotating theme for each month of the year. I had never really engaged with the theme in that way because I am not gifted in the creativity that is needed to transform spaces. However, my new friend Bonnie would fit perfectly in this role! After she recovered from all of the fun of Kids Camp, I asked her to consider being my decorator for our kids' space. She said, "Yes!" Every month Bonnie uses her creativity and artistic ability to transform our Kids Space to a desert, city, farm, amusement park, lion's den, etc. with stunning results that are enjoyed by everyone who enters the room!

I smile every time I see Bonnie's decorations! They serve as an example of what beauty takes place when someone willingly and unselfishly uses their gifts for God's Kingdom!

Jen Williams

Day 19: Thursday, November 16

Proverbs 3:27

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.

To me, this verse is easy to understand and to act upon. If someone you have come into contact with is doing something good, you reward them. This might be a kind gesture, such as giving a compliment, paying for the person's coffee order behind you in line at Starbucks, or giving your waitress an extra tip because of the great service she gave you. You do this nice gesture because you think they deserve it or they need it, and most importantly, you want to treat others the way you want to be treated.

The teachers and aides at Trinity Preschool and Parents' Morning Out teach this proverb and other lessons every day so that we can instruct the children on how to live with each other and with God. We are hopeful that the children will take these valuable lessons and apply them to their lives as they grow up in our community.

With fall upon us and students going back to school, I am proud to see so many Trinity Members and Trinity Preschool students taking the next step in their lives, going to college, getting married, beginning careers, and blossoming into young adults. I beam with joy when parents stop me in the grocery store to tell me about their children whom I have taught in Sunday School, at Vacation Bible School, mentored on a mission trip, or had the privilege to have in my class at Trinity Preschool over the last 20 years. Parents remind me of the great foundation that Trinity Preschool provided for their children over the years.

The school has been around for generations. As a matter of fact, my father-in-law, Bill Breed, was part of the Trinity Kindergarten Class of 1955. He came across his class pictures on Facebook when his classmates were posting pictures for his Douglas Southhall Freeman class reunion. We were looking at the pictures and sharing the realization that he was in the same program as his grandchildren.

Many new parents come through the doors of Trinity to tour our facility and tell me, "I went here as a child, and the place sure hasn't changed

much!” The school is in dire need of improvements with bathrooms, windows, lighting, flooring, heating, ventilation, and cooling. Our school is a special place to learn, grow, and play. If you have the power to act now, please consider your talents, time, and gifts to the Building Generations Together Capital Campaign. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Katie Swartz
Trinity Preschool and PMO Director

Day 20: Friday, November 17

Deuteronomy 15:10

Give generously to them and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.

When I read this passage, I am reminded of the experience Kirk and I had years ago in a small Bible group we attended. It was headed up by a man named Convenencio Alexander. The subject was tithing and he asked each of us if we tithed? We replied, “No,” but offered that we always gave our “fair share”. He was most astonished and challenged us as Christians that we were missing out on the Lord’s blessings by not giving our first fruits to our church. Convenencio affirmed that our church is our first storehouse whereby the first 10% is offered.

One couple offered that they were not prepared to tithe to their current church, and he replied “then find a church where your heart is motivated to support the church and its work with your first 10%”. We replied that we were not comfortable that we could afford this level of support. Not long after Convenencio taught a three-week study on tithing, with passages from both the Old and New Testament. We pledged 10% for the upcoming campaign at River Road United Methodist where we were members at that time. We feel deeply that we have been blessed richly since we made that commitment and continue to be blessed to this day.

Trinity UMC has been such a blessing to us, especially when our oldest son, Craig, died in 2004. He was only 29 years old. We don’t know how we would have managed the following months grieving over his loss. The fellowship that we experienced at Trinity was so loving and caring during some dark days dealing with his death. Members of our Sunday School class, Ordinary People, stepped up and handled all matters at a reception at our home after the burial. Milt Burton called Kirk and insisted they have lunch that week prior to the funeral services. Kirk told Milt that he appreciated the call but we were overwhelmed with planning his funeral service and burial. Milt insisted and knew what Kirk was facing when he returned to work after our loss. Milt and Barbara had been through a tragic loss when Alysia died on 9/11 in the World Trade Center attack. Kirk has always been appreciative of Milt’s wisdom and caring manner.

As a final thought, when our hearts were touched to begin tithing, we asked whether we should tithing our gross or net income? Convenencio replied “Do you want to be blessed gross or net?” We have always loved his response, and Kirk even commented, “Gross makes it an easy amount to calculate the tithing!!!”

Leila Spitzer

Day 21: Saturday, November 18

Romans 12:8

If it is to encourage then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

We may not always know what our talents and gifts are, but Paul makes it clear that encouragement, giving, leading, and showing mercy are all important. As we walk with God through life, we believe He will open doors and show us what to do for God and the church. We should do this with a cheerful and generous heart.

Mike and I are lifelong Methodists and it was only natural that we find a church home after settling here in Richmond. We joined Trinity on October 9th, 1977, and the life cycle continued as we became involved and our sons were born, baptized, attended preschool, confirmation, and Sunday school. Families experience many changes over the years, but Trinity has always been here for us. Joyfully, another generation is attending Trinity and our granddaughters were baptized here and are in preschool now.

Paul tells us to use our gifts and talents for others. If we do this as individuals, and together as a church, we can make a huge difference for Christ in this place.

Susie and Mike Hildebrand

Commitment Sunday, November 19

2 Corinthians 8:7

But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love, we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

When I read this passage, I am reminded that giving is rooted in God's grace for us. Giving brings great blessings, especially in helping us better recognize the hand of God in our lives. Giving draws us closer to God, makes us more like God and is an investment for eternity.

I grew up attending Mountain View United Methodist Church in Dublin, VA, where my family established deep roots and attended for multiple generations. After moving to Richmond and starting my own family, it was especially important my husband and I find a church home and provide our children with the same foundation of faith we were so blessed to receive. We have now been grateful members of Trinity for eight years and our lives continue to be enriched. As I reflect on our time at Trinity, I am most inspired by the Christian path we are creating for our children and the reminder of keeping God's grace and love at the center of our busy and sometimes stressful world. Trinity is where we brought our son to pre-school, it is where we attend Sunday school, Vacation Bible School and take part in service and mission activities to support our church and our community. It is where we have celebrated baptisms, Jesus's birth, and resurrection, and get weekly reminders of the many ways God works in our lives. For all these reasons, we are the beneficiaries of God's abundance. This scripture reminds me that our appreciation can be reciprocated through the power of giving. Giving allows me to express the gratitude that fills my heart and leaves the world a better place than I found it. When I give, I become more than a single person, I multiply myself and the significance of my life for generations to come.

Emily Toalson

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, we the community of Trinity United Methodist Church give thanks to you for opportunities, past and present, to worship, study, and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We thank you for the gifts of faith and fellowship that we have experienced during our history.

As we come together today to commit ourselves to your direction for our future, we lift our hearts in gratitude to you, O Lord, for all those who helped prepare the way for us – for their worship, devotion, service and care of this beloved Church and property. For these and all your blessings, we give you thanks.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will guide us now as we pursue this campaign for the future of Trinity. Trusting in your love, help us to move forward with open and willing hearts so that we can continue to grow and serve you. Guide us, so that we may continue to meet new opportunities with courage, love and steadfastness. We ask this in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

**God,
what do You want
to do through me?**



Campaign Timeline

Sunday, November 19:
Commitment Sunday

The Trinity Community's Fair - 4 PM



Sunday, January 7, 2024
Announcement Sunday
Announce Total Pledges
Receive First Fruits Offering

Summer 2024
Work begins!

Building Generations Together Capital Campaign Website:



Campaign Goals
Testimonial Videos
Campaign Timeline
Resources
FAQs

Campaign Committee:

Brad Booker, Co-Chairperson
Gray Booker, Co-Chairperson

Campaign Leadership:	Pastor Brian Siegle
Advanced Commitments:	Jim Crowder Bruce Watson Peggy Watson
Celebration:	Bonnie Andrews Joe Andrews
Communications:	Sam Duenckel JS Smith
Lead Gifts:	Keith Reynolds Emily Toalson
Prayer:	Mike McCullough Joseph Thompson Mary-Holland Thompson
Fulfillment:	Sarah Hall
Gratitude & Ministry:	Daniel Guenther