

Trinity Times

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As a young boy, I enjoyed assembling models, whether made of plastic or wood. I always had a profound sense of joy after opening the packaging and pulling out the sheets of plastic or wooden parts, and the painting and gluing together of the various pieces and seeing it come together. But anyone who assembles models will tell you, the model at step 1 looks almost nothing like the finished piece. The first piece of the engine does not bear any resemblance to the finished and painted car. Step 1 must be followed by step 2 until all the steps are completed and then the finished model looks like the image on the box. All the steps must be completed and completed for the masterpiece to be finished.

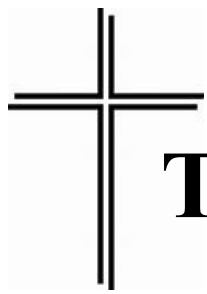
In our journeys of discipleship, we also walk in time and space by steps. In our following of the Holy Spirit's lead, we are led in stages of the one whole journey. Our moments in the "present" time always take place after our "past" events and always take place before our "future" moments. Our entire existence as the Covenant Community of Christ, is one long journey of discipleship towards the Shepherd, lived in stages or steps, 1, 2, 3, etc., until we reach the end or goal, the Kingdom of God.

In the story of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch, Philip clearly displays "discipleship by steps." *Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.)* Here is step 1 of his journey for the moment but notice that the angel neither tells him the next step or even where and why he is going down this wilderness road. He is only led and guided in a particular space and time, and the reason why and where the journey finishes is hidden from Philip. Philip is just commanded to follow the Spirit's lead and Philip does not bicker or complain about the command, he only obeys gladly the Spirit's lead.

Here is where our discipleship not only differs from Philip's but also becomes increasingly difficult. We want to not only know the result of the Spirit's leading but also what that trip is going to cost us. As people who have survived the Enlightenment and Modernity, before we make many choices, we must calculate the risks and the costs of such a trip down our wilderness roads. Where are we going, and do I want to go there? Who will I meet, and do I want to meet them? What is the point of going, and what will happen to me there? Will I be mugged on that road or meet a new friend? In essence we are not prepared to follow the Spirit's lead and trusting in the greater purpose of God for that moment. We want to know, like God knows, why, when, what, and will happen to me down that wilderness road.

We simply want to know what has been deliberately hidden from us by the Spirit. Tell me the whole journey and the results and I will tell you if I want to go or not. Is this discipleship towards the Spirit of Jesus Christ, or is this yet another attempt by us to play God and control our own lives? Are we being the Church of Jesus Christ trusting in God even when the future is hidden, or are we being fallen humans, desiring to know as God knows, which really means we want to be God? Can we handle being just humans that cannot and should not see the whole picture, traveling by stages trusting and obeying the lead of God, or must we calculate and lead ourselves through life's stages? Can we handle being a creature of God, or must we be our own God also?

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Perhaps the only hope for us fearful and self-reliant creatures is the Word become Flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. Not only is he God who leads and sustains, but because he is also human, and a perfect one at that, he also follows and trusts. Who better to help us follow the will of God as a human being, than the one who perfectly followed and disciplined the Spirit of God? And if Christ lives in us, then we can at long last, through Christ, begin to disciple God by stages. And more importantly when we find ourselves in stage 1 of a new journey, and it seems like an absurd step 1, like an afternoon trip down the wilderness road, we can like Philip trust in the plan and sight of the Holy Spirit and obey accordingly.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, I have no doubt that we all in our discipleship travels, have received at the time some absurd orders, and before we will comply with them, we often want to know the end of the journey with all the corresponding consequences before we begin. But this is not faith. Faith is trusting the destination and the journey to the Spirit, even when steps 2 through 20 have been hidden from you and step 1 sounds and looks weird. Through Christ and with Christ, let us follow God's lead with faith and trust. Amen.



In Christ,
Rev. Mark

A Note From Session

What a joy to be worshipping together again!



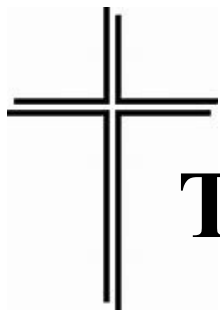
Your Deacons and Elders met together on April 21st. We spent time dwelling in the word, reading and discussing Philippians 2:1-11. We also spent time sharing our personal feelings on the past year and a review of the past year for deacons and elders prior to looking forward to where we can be headed this year. Each group then adjourned to their regular monthly meetings. Session approved motions from the Property Committee for replacing the exterior sanctuary doors and replacing the kitchen stove. Both of those motions will be presented to the congregation at our Annual Congregational Meeting on May 23rd.

We look forward to continuing to worship and work together to strive to discern where God would have Trinity move. Please keep us in your prayers.

Blessings,
Mary Belding, Clerk

Annual Congregational Meeting

Our annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, May 23rd following worship in the sanctuary. We will be receiving the reports from all our committees, reviewing the year's finances, electing the nominating committee members, and receiving several bids for capital improvement projects from the Property/Finance committee. If you are an active member, please plan on attending this meeting.



Trinity Times

Grateful...Thankful...Blessed...

*God has a plan for everyone and everything. That includes you, and it includes
Trinity Presbyterian Church. None of us can fully know God's plan—the best we can do
is pray and listen for clarity.*

Where is God leading us? By the time you read this, we will have held our Town Hall meeting. An update will be shared in our next newsletter. On the agenda was discussing ideas on capital improvement projects for 2021 and the future. To date donations totaling \$18,553.21 have been made to our Capital Improvement Fund. Many projects have already been completed and our current balance is \$1,622.38. In one year we have accomplished so much—let's keep this wheel moving forward!

As stated in our February newsletter, we cancelled the contract with our cleaning company. We have now hired a new custodian. Billy Mong recently began working to keep our church clean! Billy will work ten hours each week as a contracted employee. A special thank-you to Mary Belding, Dale and Kathy Fassett, and Beth Dougherty for keeping the church clean during this transition.

Current quotes being obtained for:

- Estimates on gutters for better drainage.
- Replacement of the double doors located in the back of the sanctuary on the east side
- Our stove in the kitchen cannot be repaired so we are researching quotes to replace it
- New window blinds

Consider ways you can help the committee:

- Join the Property and Finance Committee.
- Let a member of the committee know what specific talent(s) you have, i.e. painting, plumbing, electric, landscaping, etc.
- Let a member of the committee know if you see something that needs to be fixed, or volunteer to fix it yourself.
- Support the expenses of the church by pledging.

Per Capita for 2021 is \$32.41.

*The Property and Finance committee
would like to thank everyone for your continued support.*

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

(2 Corinthians 9:6)

God's blessings to all,

Beth Dougherty

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A Note From Scrip

Thank you for all the support you are giving to the Scrip program.

Because we are being cautious about close encounters, it is not as convenient to purchase scrip cards.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Dee and Mary greatly appreciate our “regular” customers and thank all who participate.

Call or text 440.862.6786, call 964.6073, or e-mail at mbelding237@gmail.com.

Blessings from Co-coordinators of Trinity’s Scrip Program,

Dee Fassett and Mary Belding



A Note from Community Outreach

Trinity, through the Community Outreach Committee, continues to share the love of Christ through many endeavors.

We have adopted a calendar of events for the year which include:

May– Accept baby shower donations for HIP at GO. **Bring donations by May 23rd!**

Donate diapers/funds to Children and Family Services

June- Donations for GO-TBD

August– Back to school donations for AACS- TBD

September- Accept clothes/shoes/boots for GO-TBD

October- Trinity Neighborhood Halloween Party

November/December- Christmas donations TBD

We continue to support the Faith Lutheran Food Pantry with your contributions. We asked them if there are specific needs. They gave us this list:

Bars of soap, Pudding cups, Fruit cups, Jelly- small jars, Canned meat, Anything shelf-stable – boxed and canned, Personal hygiene items – shampoo, deodorant, tooth paste, tooth brushes.

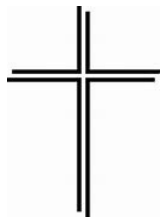
We also continue to support Youth Opportunities with Giant Eagle Scrip cards and Plymouth United Methodist Church food pantry with cash for meal boxes.

Thank you for your contributions throughout the year.

If you have any suggestions for where we can reach out, please let us know.

All are welcome to join this committee!!

Barb, Dee, Joyce, Kathy, Mark, Mary, Nancy, Pam, and Ruth Ann



May 2021



Website www.trinityashtabula.org
Email trinitypres04@gmail.com
Deacon On Call: Jane Planisek 440-997-9013
Elder On Call: Peg Ladu 440-993-9271

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Communion Face-Face Worship 10:30am Video Worship	3	4 Al-Anon 7pm	5 Bible Study 10am N/A 7pm	6 Bible Study 7pm	7	8
9 2 nd A Meal Face-Face Worship 10:30am Video Worship	10	11 Al-Anon 7pm	12 Bible Study 10am Property and Finance 6:30pm N/A 7pm	13 Bible Study 7pm	14	15
16 Face-Face Worship 10:30am Video Worship	17 MRC Mtg 6:30pm	18 Al-Anon 7pm	19 Bible Study 10am Community Outreach 6pm Session 7pm N/A 7pm	20 Bible Study 7pm	21	22
23 Pentecost Face-Face Worship 10:30am Annual Congregational Meeting After Worship Video Worship	24	25 Al-Anon 7pm	26 Bible Study 10am N/A 7pm Personnel Mtg. 6:30pm	27 Bible Study 7pm	28	29
30 Face-Face Worship 10:30am Video Worship	31 Memorial Day					