# Trinotes

February 4, 2026

The Mission of Trinity United Methodist Church is to proclaim God's love by building community and living by the example and teachings of Jesus Christ.

## ICE Melts

Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:8-10

It was a tinkering sound, the sleet hitting the windows of my bedroom Saturday morning. I stayed where I was, warm in bed, because there's nothing quite like warm feet hitting the cold hardwood floors. The longer I listened, the more it sounded like the etching of glass - a tinkering but also a scratching. I knew that as soon as I left the warmth of the bed, the requests would begin - the ones every parent gets. Can we go sledding? Will you make snow cream? This is what we do when it snows, but this wasn't snow. Snow didn't tinker or etch. Snow is lovely to watch as each unique flake silently falls to the earth. Peaceful.

It was cold outside - ice cold - and as I write this it still is. 15 degrees, to be exact. It "feels like" is 11 which is an improvement on Saturday when the "feels like temperature" was 1 degree. I imagined it would be a slow day inside with my family. I imagined the quiet stillness that is, in effect, a snow day, even though the world was covered, instead in ice.

Ice is treacherous. It means terrible road conditions and inevitably accidents from folks who thought they could brave it without 4-wheel-drive. It means making the difficult decision to call off worship, although this one time, it was not difficult. It means death for someone, somewhere - maybe not here, though we've had people die from extreme cold temperatures in my time. I think, as I write this, that there have been two deaths related to "Winter Storm Fern," so far.

That is the nature of ice. It comes and with it, there is death. That is the nature of winter - a time when the earth bends to change of season. The leaves have already died and shed from trees. We don't hear the birds singing outside, as they've all flown the coop. The earth, in essence, dies unto itself. I think the harder thing about this ice is that it's going to melt and freeze again in the frigid temperatures of nighttime.

It'll do that today, as the sun is out. It'll do it again tomorrow. This ice will keep coming back and rearing it's treacherous head to do its unwinding damage on creation and its people. Maybe I'm not writing about the weather anymore. Saturday was not peaceful. It wasn't remotely what I'd hoped it would be. In Minnesota, Saturday, a man - Alex Pretti, a VA, ICU nurse - was killed by ICE. Though it was a kind of cold that many of us in the south have never experienced before, I'm not writing of the temperature or weather, but of the government agency charged with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and here's what might get lost in the argument that has unfolded since: There is never a time when killing is okay.

If you are United Methodist, and I'd almost assume that if you are getting this, you are, here's where we stand on situations like this - as seen in both our Social Principles (which can be found in the Book of Discipline) and our Book of Resolutions, death like this and like capitol punishment violates the sanctity of life, denies Christ's power to redeem, and is often unfairly, and disproportionately implemented, in such a way that it impacts, more often, the poor, marginalized, and racial minorities of our time. The UMC goes as far as to unequivocally call for the end to social vengeance that cannot be equated with justice.

In different terms…. When we take a life, we disallow the work of God, or the capacity of God's work, in and through that person. Never mind that "thou shalt not kill" is one of the 'Big Ten' (the Ten Commandments). The light of Christ that Pretti carried within himself is the same light of Christ every human being has, and it is not the prerogative of humanity to extinguish that light. It is God's prerogative only and only our prerogative to love.

So in the cold of Saturday night, I did what felt like the most feeble thing I could do, but I did so out of love. I lit a candle. I prayed for peace. I prayed we'd, again, recognize and claim the sanctity of human life. I prayed that we'd, again, recognize the Jesus in us and the Jesus in others - all others - in the beautiful and Divinely inspired makeup of humankind. I lit a candle, and I set it outside in the accumulated ice on my porch, knowing that the candle would begin to melt the ice around it - hopeful that the light of Christ in us each, would do the same.

Love, friends. Just love.

Rev. Sara

2025 Stewardship/Finance Update

It may feel like 2025 is fast receding in our rearview mirrors. Before leaving the year behind at Trinity, I want to update you about our stewardship and finance for the year.

Overall, it was a good year for us. In early 2025 we received a second major contribution to the Rosemary Potter Endowment. The total endowment serves as a backstop to our historic endowment fund. We use interest from the Potter Endowment to assist with our budget expenses.

Our pledged giving greatly improved in 2025 while our non-pledged giving was below budget expectations. Our facility use income increased for the year as well.

On the expense side we spent approximately $7,700 less than budgeted. For the year our net operating revenue (i.e. income less expenses) was approximately $ 4,600. While this amount was less than originally budgeted, it was a positive outcome. In December we transferred $5,000 from our checking account to the Holmquist Fund, used by the Trustees for buildings and grounds maintenance and improvements.

What strikes me as most important are not the numbers, but what the numbers reflect. We are a small membership congregation with a significant budget. Trinitarians stepped forward in 2025 to support mission, ministries, and outreach to our community and beyond.

Much will be asked of us in 2026. We look forward in hope and expectation of growth in ministries and service. Our faith commitments are critical to who we are as a congregation, under girding what we seek to do and who we seek to be at Trinity.

Craig Jordan,
Stewardship/Finance Chair


A little Snow was here and there
Disseminated in her Hair -
Since she and I had met and played
Decade had gathered to Decade -

But Time had added not obtained
Impregnable the Rose
For summer too indelible
Too obdurate for Snows -

Emily Dickinson

We would like to express our deep gratitude to our Trinity family for all of the prayers, notes, and phone calls during my brother David's long illness and passing. Your concern for our family has meant so much to us.
Thank you.
Carol and Carey Miller

A Gift Has Been Given In Honor Of
Irene Dycus
By Marc & Sue Taylor


# Finding Hope

At the beginning of this year, I decided that my "holy word" for 2026 would be HOPE. Truthfully, I think I chose this word because I have felt hopeless in the light of all that has been happening in politics and our society. Rather than being encouraged by my choice of this word, I felt increasingly discouraged and hopeless, as I entered a dark period and experienced a crisis of faith. I became a "prayer warrior" of the worst kind, ranting and raving - albeit silently - on my early morning prayer walks in the hallway corridor outside my apartment. I may have been striding out physically, but I was limping along spiritually.

Then things began to happen. First, I was the teacher in our children's Godly Play Sunday School Class on January 18th. Our lesson was on the Good Shepherd. As I shared about the "dark and dangerous places" through which the Good Shepherd leads the sheep, I realized that I was personally in just such a place. I have been in that darkness before, and each time the Lord has revealed Himself to me in some way, reassuring me that He was there WITH me. In worship that morning, the Trinity Singers sang "This Little Light of Mine." Although I stumbled through Children's Time, talking with my two grandchildren about how we can let our own lights shine as we reflect Christ's light in the world, I sensed my personal darkness beginning to diminish somewhat.

Second, because of my chronic "busy-ness," I had been putting off visiting two former University Street neighbors and long-time friends to deliver my holiday Nuts & Bolts, a tradition dating back to my sons' childhood days. I finally got around to doing that on Monday of that week, even though Christmas was almost a month ago, visiting one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. We caught up on what our families were doing, compared our aches and pains, and laughed and celebrated happy memories of the past. We also shared our concerns and fears about what the future held for our families and our church families, and each of us found our burdens were lifted somewhat as we did so.

The third thing was the readings in The Upper Room Disciplines. The week's focus was on "Texts of Trauma and Hope." Tuesday's scripture - Matthew 4:12-23 - was about the beginnings of Jesus' ministry. In this passage, Jesus quotes from Isaiah 9. These words touched my heart as I read them: "The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned" (Isaiah 9:2). As the week progressed, I discovered the truth in what the author of the devotionals, Rev. Patrick B. Reyes, said on Saturday: that the texts from the Bible "offer us some guideposts for how our ancestors [in the faith] met and dealt with the trauma of their lives." He invited readers to "sit with these texts for what they are – cries of pain, songs of trauma and hope, and reminders that we have been here before. Know the ancestors of our tradition are walking with us on this day and every day." On Sunday, my 80th birthday, Isaiah 9:2 appeared once again and shone its light into my heart, as the author reminded readers that we can be "a good ancestor, a keeper of a sacred fire that burns for generations, tended to and nurtured." He said:

A good ancestor lives a life that makes space for future generations to thrive. They focus on loving the community before them, writing them songs and letters, addressing their particular fears and hope. A good ancestor explores the depths of the moment while placing it in the context of previous generations. A good ancestor reminds their people that God's people have been here before.

As we struggle with how we can faithfully respond to the trauma and suffering that we see happening in our country and the world right now, I invite you to join me in praying the prayer from that last devotional: "God, we pray for the fire-keepers. In a world that tries to put their light out, we ask that you sustain their spirit so that their ministry and light may shine for all to see. Amen."

Peace and love,
Irene

# February Birthdays

Alex Landrigan 6
Sally Ramsey 7
Myra Finch 12
Clay Polk 20
Eli Witt 22
Sara Corum 27
Amy Moritz 27
David Hopper 27

A Gift Has Been Given In Honor of
Myra Finch
Given by Doris Porter


## Of History and Hope
by Miller Williams

We have memorized America,
how it was born and who we have been and where.
In ceremonies and silence we say the words,
telling the stories, singing the old songs.
We like the places they take us. Mostly we do.
The great and all the anonymous dead are there.
We know the sound of all the sounds we brought.
The rich taste of it is on our tongues.
But where are we going to be, and why, and who?
The disenfranchised dead want to know.
We mean to be the people we meant to be,
to keep on going where we meant to go.

But how do we fashion the future?
Who can say how except in the minds of those who will call it Now?
The children. The children. And how does our garden grow?
With waving hands -- oh, rarely in a row --
and flowering faces. And brambles, that we can no longer allow.
Who were many people coming together
cannot become one people falling apart.
Who dreamed for every child an even chance
cannot let luck alone turn doorknobs or not.
Whose law was never so much of the hand as the head
cannot let chaos make its way to the heart.
Who have seen learning struggle from teacher to child
cannot let ignorance spread itself like rot.
We know what we have done and what we have said,
and how we have grown, degree by slow degree,
believing ourselves toward all we have tried to become --
just and compassionate, equal, able, and free.

All this in the hands of children, eyes already set
on a land we never can visit -- it isn't there yet --
but looking through their eyes, we can see
what our long gift to them may come to be.
If we can truly remember, they will not forget.

From The Ways We Touch: Poems by Miller Williams

# Prayer Concerns

For our country and world leaders, that they seek God's guidance in how they lead, for those persons and families that have suffered at the hands of ICE, for survivors of natural disasters across the globe and those who've lost loved ones due to those disasters, for the victims and families of victims of gun violence, for the people of the Ukraine as war with Russia continues, for those in our world suffering religious persecution, refugees seeking asylum, safe drinking water in developing countries, for those who suffer at the hands of terrorism, the poor, homeless, and disenfranchised, for immigrants, persons of color, and allies of each, and for a resolution of the division among the people of the U.S.

The United Methodist Church - for our Pastor, Rev. Sara Corum, her husband, Rev.

Josh McClurkan, and their children; for our Bishop, the Rev. David Graves; for our

interim District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Deborah Smith

Trinity UMC - for members of the congregation homebound due to chronic illness or age; for new visitors joining us as we worship in person and online; for all families who are grieving; for our congregation as we deal with transitions; and wisdom for our Trustees and Church Council. Also, specific prayer requests by and for:
**Lisa Wong and Rob Landrigan** and their family as they grieve the loss of Lisa's father, James Yew-Chin Wong
**Chris Glover** as she grieves the loss of her brother, Bobby Glover
**Carol Miller** as she grieves the loss of her brother, David
Sam Goff, brother, **James Goff** – respiratory issues
Callie Bugg's, son, **Ryan Wofford** – healing & resolution from seizures
Caley Foreman's sister, **Debra**, memory & health issues
**Laura Comes Hubbard**, incurable multiple myeloma
**Jimmy Rast**, Melba Abraham's brother, genetic Alzheimer's
**Millie**, a patient at St. Jude (from Myra Finch)
Betsy Black's friend **Ken Savage**, diagnosed with metastatic cancer.
Betsy's brother Jerry's brother-in-law **Bobby Johnson**, bad accident
**Baby Stella**, born 7 weeks early
Sharman Murley & Frank Cantrell's son, **Frank, Jr.**, heart issues
From Sandy Guntharp: **Jim Stafford**, living alone with dementia
**Sandy Guntharp** as she grieves
Martha Ostenrude's close friend **Ashley**, diagnosed with leukemia
Continued prayers for **Sally Ramsey** and daughter **Sandi**
From Joan Smith, **Doug Robbins family**: cancer recovery, book sales, 2 teenage sons's recovery from orthopedic surgery
**Deanna Ward Willis**, leg amputation
For Sharman Murley's grandchild **El**, for well-being, making friends, and a better school experience
Chris Glover's sister, **Sherry Carruthers**
From Elizabeth Hopper, **Lida Browne Martin**, battling cancer
**Jacob Foreman**, for healing and pain relief
**Julia Archer** has MS. (Friend of the Millers)
Carol Miller's brother, **Jerry Harrison**
Carey's brother, **Lee Miller**, is in long-term rehab
**Val Coates**, for relief of constant pain & healing of multiple issues
**Karen Barker**, Sara Goff's sister
**Jonathan Goff**
**Laura Major Conner**, for her physical health and living situation
For Trinity's new **Youth Group** and **Confirmation Class**
For **Trinity's Children's SS Class**