Trinity United Church of Christ
"Embracing and Celebrating God's Love"
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Rev. Dr. Monica Dawkins– Smith
Melinda Thomas, *Office Manager*
Joi Griffith, *Administrative Assistant*
Luke Tegtmeier, *Organist /Choir Director*
Laura Schantz, *Bell Choir Director*
Phil Starr/Jack Senn, *Business Managers*
Connie Plant/Larry Keiner, *Custodians*

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A Season of Gratitude and Welcome

Trinity has been living through a season of transition, and God has provided faithful pastoral leadership along the way.

For the past three and a half months, Trinity has been significantly blessed by the presence and ministry of the Rev. Ray Deuring. He came out of retirement with an agreement to serve Trinity for the summer, not simply because we had a need, but because of his love for this congregation, stemming from his membership during the 1970s to the 1990s, which led him to the seminary. We are deeply grateful that he set aside his retirement to provide us with consistency and so much more.

His ministry among us has brought a wonderful combination of the past and present, reminding us of who we once were and providing hope of who we may become. With his distinct combination of steadiness, compassion and wit, he has helped us worship, listen, laugh, reflect and simply be together. His presence has indeed been a gift.

Some of us will also remember the introspection sparked by his Psalms Creative Writing study. What a gift to spend time with Scripture not only by reading the Psalms, but by responding to them with our own words, questions and creativity.

Though he had his reservations about coming out of retirement–and frequently reminded us he was looking forward to those carefree days again, we hope he returns to retirement with no regrets. As his time with Trinity comes to a close, we offer our most sincere thanks for the way he has shared his gifts with us, the leadership he has provided, and above all, the abundant love he has shown this congregation.

As we look to the future, we trust in God's faithfulness. Your Consistory has been hard at work planning for Trinity's future, including the transition from Rev. Ray to our next ministry partner. We have been guided to the Rev. Dr. Monica Dawkins-Smith, who we are excited to introduce to Trinity as our next bridge minister during this continued season of Trinity's life.

In the months ahead, she will worship with us, listen to our stories, and give thoughtful attention to the spiritual health and life of our congregation. As our pastoral leader, she will strategically lead the congregation to prayerfully consider who we are and where God is calling Trinity. We look forward to getting to know her, to sharing the life of this congregation with her, and to the gifts she will bring to our ministry together.

Transitions can bring feelings that are seemingly at odds with each other, but there is a grace-filled truth in knowing we can hold more than one emotion at a time. In this instance, we can be grateful for the ministry we have shared with Rev. Ray, while still feeling the sadness of saying goodbye. While we can be hopeful in welcoming Dr. Monica, we can carry with us respect for the gifts of those who have served before.

Through all of it, though, the one constant is that God remains at work in the life of Trinity, and we trust in His goodness to continue guiding us in the season ahead.

Peace and Grace,

Trinity UCC Consistory



Dear Friends at Trinity UCC,

There is much to enjoy about this time of year: vibrant fall foliage, cooler temperatures, football, and, of course, Christmas items appearing in stores—seemingly earlier every year!

While some might already be counting down to Christmas, I invite us to make room for Advent, which begins on Sunday, November 29. Before we find ourselves swept up in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season, Advent calls us to pause, breathe, and prepare our hearts.

Advent is a season of hopeful anticipation. We wait as an expectant people for Christ's coming among us: Emmanuel. God with us.

One of my favorite Advent meditations comes from the Iona Community. It speaks to the hopes and longings we carry as we wait:

One: I am everywoman and everyman. In my loneliness, I am waiting to be visited; in my uncertainty, I am waiting to be reassured; in my happiness, I am waiting for a deeper fulfillment; in my soul, I am waiting to be wanted. Pray for me, and for yourself, for we are all waiting. On God alone I wait silently…

All: I am the Lord your God. I have waited on you, and have heard your prayer. Now is the right time, and I am coming soon. So, prepare a way in the desert, a cradle in the hay, a meeting place in the marketplace, a table in an upstairs room, a cross on a hill, a grave in a garden, a throne in your heart as in heaven. For now again, I will bend down and remember you. I will answer your prayer, and your waiting will end in joy.

—(Adapted and excerpted from Cloth for the Cradle).

As we prepare our hearts to receive and wait for Christ's advent, his coming, this advent reading reminds us that our waiting will end in joy! And *"joy is the simplest form of gratitude."* (Karl Barth)

Whatever we bring into this season—loneliness, uncertainty, happiness, or longing—we can trust that God hears our prayers and meets us in our waiting. Advent invites us to make room for that encounter: in our hearts, in our relationships, and in our life together as a church family.

As November turns our attention toward thanksgiving, may gratitude help prepare the way for joy. We give thanks for God's greatest gift: God dwelling among us in Jesus Christ. We also give thanks for the everyday gifts through which God's love becomes visible—a welcoming smile, a shared meal, an encouraging word, and a caring faith community.

I give thanks to God for each of you and for your ministry here at Trinity UCC in Wooster. Your warm hospitality has been a blessing, and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside you. As we enter this season together, may we make space to listen, to pray, and to recognize God's presence among us.

Waiting with joy,

Dr. Monica
Rev. Dr. Monica Dawkins-Smith

Financial Position September 2026

Trinity UCC Wooster – *"Embracing and Celebrating God's Love"*

General Operating Fund Financial Snapshot

	Current Month		**2026 Year to date**		**Last year actual**
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	YTD
Income	$48,725	$25,233	$281,060	$258,529	$250,826
Expenses	$32,909	$37,242	$299,258	$330,356	$268,035
Net	$15,817	($12,009)	($18,198)	($71,827)	($17,209)

Comments: Contribution income was slightly over-budget for September. We have used the remaining of our available Endowment funds to help balance out the quarter. We are showing a deficit of $18k year to date, and we have used the available $132k of endowment funds. This brings our actual deficit to $150k . We are asking our members and friends to consider additional donations to help us come closer to balancing our 2026 budget. We incurred higher building costs as we had our annual fire alarm inspection, had fire systems technical work and incurred more lock and handicap door repairs.

Building Repair Fund/Kitchen Renovation Balance: - ($253,853)

Please continue to give towards the Kitchen Renovation. 2026 will be our final and third year. Many thanks for those who have contributed towards the project.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM BALANCE: $26,571.

Trinity Breakfast program – 31 years
Established in the summer of 1995.

Our Breakfast program is 31 years old!



Take my Gifts

"Take my gifts and let me love you"

Please faithfully consider your 2027 Pledge to Trinity. Your support of our Ministry in downtown Wooster is needed, especially during this transition period. Stewardship Sunday is Sunday November 8, 2026.

Stewardship 2026

9 Now it is not necessary for me to write you about the ministry to the saints, 2 for I know your eagerness,

6 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (from 2 Corinthians 9)

Yes, here it is, your annual stewardship letter. If God loves a cheerful giver you have right now the opportunity to be delighted in giving!

Trinity U.C.C. has such a long and great history of working miracles when miracles were needed. It would be difficult to count the many remodeling projects, the large maintenance tasks, the nearly constant community-action programs, not to mention so many mission events.

You, by your loving involvement in the Trinity family have been a part of that and I thank God for your participation in the ministries we do here. You, as so many have in our past, make all these things possible in the name and for the sake of our Risen Lord.

Church budgets are difficult things to put together especially when the committee has no assurance of what the year will bring financially. Pledging helps their task and I would encourage you to fill out a pledge card that makes budget planning a bit easier. Whether you pledge or not I can promise you nothing the church needs or uses will go down in price this year or any year moving forward. So I ask you to prayerfully consider your offering percentages as we kick off our stewardship drive Sunday

November 8th,when we encourage our members to pledge their support of our ministry in the coming year. If you are unable to attend Pledge Dedication Sunday, you may bring or mail your pledge to the church office or place it in the offering plate on any Sunday. Electronic giving is an option. You may also sign up for this convenient way of supporting the church.

We appreciate your partnership in the important work that we do in the Wooster community and throughout the world. Together, our gifts make a difference. Thank you in advance for your support.

May our good God continue to bless and keep you in everything you do and in every season.

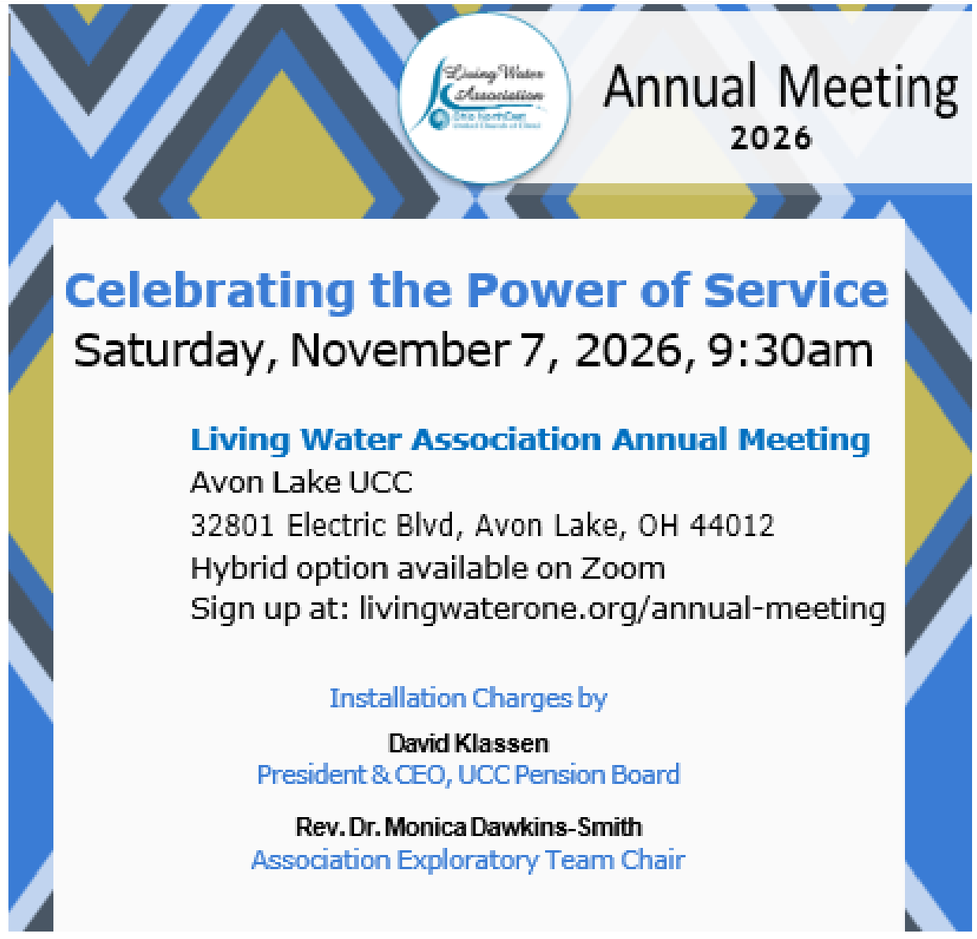
In grateful appreciation,
Rev Ray Deuring

Take whatever I can offer *Gifts that I have yet to find*
Skills that I am slow to sharpen *Talents of the hand and mind*
Things made beautiful for others *In the place where I must be*
Take my gifts and let me love you *God who first of all loved me.*
(V. 3, "Take My Gifts" NCH)

Pledge cards are coming in the mail. If you have not received yours by November 8 Phil and Jack will have them available before worship service.

November Birthdays!

Brad Brinkerhoff 2nd
Paul Varno 4th
Sharen Brigham 5th
Jessica Goodright 5th
David Boyer 6th
Robert Lalonde 10th
Patty Mottern 11th
Adam Vizzo 11th
Brenda Leist 12th
Steve Landers 13th
Chris Gehring 14th
Joyce Schroer 14th
Pat Gerber 15th
Jayne Armstrong 16th
Elizabeth Wright 16th
Roger Pyers 16th
Sarah Shoots 17th
Irene Winner 17th
Steve Schroer 17th
Joshua Haney 17th
Ian Lilburn 21st
Kristine Mitchell 21st
Scott Cooper 22nd
Vicky Senff 22nd
Nicole Chuma 27th
Shirley Snoddy 27th
Christian Raber 29th



Growing in Faith Together This November

November is a time to reflect on our blessings, give thanks, and celebrate the many ways we share God's love with one another. As the days grow cooler and we gather with family and friends, we are reminded of the importance of gratitude, generosity, and community.

Our faith grows stronger when we share our gifts, welcome others, and serve together. Every act of service, no matter how big or small, is an opportunity to reflect God's love and help make our worship experience meaningful and welcoming for everyone.

Our worship services are enriched by the many volunteers who faithfully give of their time and talents. We invite you to prayerfully consider serving in one of these important ministries:

📖 **Lay Reader** – Share God's Word and help bring the Scripture message to life.

🌼 **Altar Flowers** – Beautify our worship space in honor, memory, or celebration of someone special.

🤝 **Usher / Greeter** – Offer a warm welcome and help everyone feel at home.

☕ **Coffee Hour Host** – Create a place of fellowship and conversation after worship.

Whether you are serving for the first time or continuing a ministry you have enjoyed for years, your gifts make a lasting difference. Every smile, every greeting, every reading, and every cup of coffee shared helps strengthen the bonds of our church family and reflects Christ's love in action. Sign up on the sheets in the narthex or contact the church office to reserve your spot. As we enter this season of thanksgiving, let us remember that one of the greatest ways to express our gratitude is through serving others. May we continue to serve with thankful hearts, generous spirits, and a deep commitment to sharing God's love with all.

Homeward Bound First Annual Dinner

Homeward Bound is preparing for its First Annual Dinner, and the congregation is invited to join them in celebrating this important milestone and supporting their mission of dignity-centered community work.

The evening will also include a special recognition of Janet Burkhart for her commitment to the Homeward Bound mission.

Friday, November 20
5:30 PM – Social & Silent Auction
6:00 PM – Dinner & Short Program
Location: Trinity Fellowship Hall
Cost: $40 per person
Please RSVP by November 2.
To register, visit bit.ly/4gxa4OA

Homeward Bound appreciates Trinity UCC's continued partnership and support in helping connect neighbors with opportunities to build a stronger and more caring community. We hope you will consider attending and helping celebrate this special occasion!

Looking Ahead!

Faith Formation Meeting 6pm - November 3
Quilters 10am - November 4 & November 11
Sauerkraut Supper 4:30-6:30p - November 5
Men's Breakfast @ Farmer Boy 8am - November 7
Consistory Meeting 6pm - November 10
Mission Team Meeting 4pm - November 17
Women's Lunch 11:30am - November 18
Annual Thankful for Gage Thanksgiving Dinner in Fellowship Hall 12-8p - November 24
OFFICE CLOSED - November 26 & November 27
Fellowship Friday Game Night 7-9pm - November 27
ACT Book Talk 9a - Every Sunday
Choir 9:30am - Every Sunday
ONA Book Study 7pm (On Zoom) - Every Monday
Creative Arts at Trinity (C.A.T.) 4:30pm - Every Wednesday
Bell Choir 6:30pm– Every Thursday
Dedication of the Cross W/ Steve Neff - Date To Be Announced

Sauerkraut Supper



Trinity United Church of Christ
150 East North Street, Wooster, Ohio 44691
Phone: 330-264-9250

Thursday, November 5, 2026
4:30p—7:00p

MENU

Roasted Pork, Sauerkraut, Mashed Potatoes,
Green Beans, Applesauce, Pie, & Coffee

$18.00 for Adults
$8.00 for Children under 8

Tickets available in the church office

All proceeds will go to further our mission in downtown Wooster.





Christmas Wishes



Trinity is happy to sponsor 8 area children who are part of the Wayne County Children's Services program.

In the Narthex there is a notebook with all the information.

Please choose a wish you can fulfill along with your name and phone number. Wrap the gift.

Put a post-it note on the package listing the case number, name, and contents.

Bring the wrapped package (s) to Trinity – by December 2.

Your kindness and generosity are much appreciated as you make sure these young people have a very Merry Christmas.

Questions: Contact Sandy Wenger at sandywenger@zoominternet.net







November – Daily U.S. Observances
November invites us to practice gratitude, care for our neighbors, honor those who serve, and celebrate the blessings of family and community.

November 1: All Saints' Day – Remembering faithful people whose lives continue to inspire us.
November 2: National Ohio Day – Celebrating Ohio's history and communities.
November 3: National Sandwich Day – Enjoying a favorite meal and sharing food together.
November 4: National Candy Day – Celebrating a sweet treat and simple joys.
November 5: National Love Your Red Hair Day – Appreciating the unique qualities that make each person special.
November 6: National Saxophone Day – Celebrating music's power to uplift and connect us.
November 7: National Bison Day – Appreciating wildlife and caring for creation.
November 8: National STEM/STEAM Day – Encouraging curiosity, creativity, and lifelong learning.
November 9: World Freedom Day – Reflecting on freedom, justice, and the importance of human rights.
November 10: Marine Corps Birthday – Honoring the history and service of U.S. Marines.
November 11: Veterans Day – Thanking all who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.
November 12: National Chicken Soup for the Soul Day – Remembering the comfort found in kindness and encouragement.
November 13: National Indian Pudding Day – Celebrating a traditional New England dessert.
November 14: National Seat Belt Day – Promoting safety and care for our loved ones.
November 15: National Philanthropy Day – Honoring generosity and those who give to help others.
November 16: National Button Day – Appreciating the little things that help hold life together.
November 17: National Take a Hike Day – Enjoying nature and refreshing our spirits outdoors.
November 18: National Princess Day – Celebrating imagination, courage, and kindness in favorite stories.
November 19: National Play Monopoly Day – Making time for games, laughter, and fellowship.
November 20: National Child's Day – Celebrating children and supporting their growth and well-being.
November 21: National Adoption Day – Celebrating adoptive families and the bonds of belonging.
November 22: National Cranberry Relish Day – Enjoying seasonal foods and family traditions.
November 23: National Espresso Day – Enjoying conversation and fellowship over a favorite drink.
November 24: National Sardines Day – Recognizing a nutritious food enjoyed around the world.
November 25: National Tie One On Day – Encouraging kindness through homemade gifts and thoughtful gestures.
November 26: Thanksgiving Day – Giving thanks for life's blessings, family, friends, and community.
November 27: Native American Heritage Day – Honoring Native American history, cultures, and contributions.
November 28: Small Business Saturday – Supporting local businesses that strengthen our communities.
November 29: Electronic Greetings Day – Reaching out to loved ones to stay connected.
November 30: Computer Security Day – Encouraging safe and responsible use of technology.

ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET
Sunday, December 6, 11:30-2:00pm
Fellowship Hall

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. Matthew 25: 35 NIV

As Christians, we are called to care for the least of these, showing our love of Christ through our actions. The Alternative Gift Market is a wonderful opportunity to show our Christian love and to learn about projects around the world that relieve poverty and suffering. This year, the market supports almost forty projects addressing hunger, health and well-being, education, the environment, gender equality, peace and justice. Examples of the sixteen projects in the U.S. include helping homeless veterans, addressing agriculture and food insecurity, and reentry support for incarcerated individuals. Global projects include humanitarian aid in Ukraine, support for women and LGBTQIA individuals deported from the U.S., well restoration in South Sudan villages, and support for women leading conflict resolution.
An Alternative Gift is a real gift, given in honor of a friend or loved one. They express our stewardship of the world God gave us, and give us a real way to care for our brothers and sisters. Every gift is accompanied by a beautiful card and a description of what project you have chosen for the recipient.

For many years, Trinity has partnered with other area churches to sponsor this very special shopping experience. We invite and encourage you to join us on Sunday, December 6th, in Fellowship Hall for lunch (proceeds benefit Homeward Bound Emergency Shelter and Day Center), music, fellowship, fun and learning. Shoppers will also enjoy the beautiful handmade crafts from developing countries that will be available for purchase, along with coffee, tea, and chocolate. These make great gifts for anyone on your list!

We will begin serving lunch at 11:30. There will be lots to see and learn!

Please call Nancy Lilburn at 330-234-6848 for more information.

Thank you.

See you at the Market!

Climate Justice Mission

This month of Thanksgiving and Gratitude I am lifted and hopeful about the future of our planet. There are many positive grassroots movements springing up here in Wooster, around the country and the world. This fall I attended a pollinator garden planning workshop headed by Ken Schaffer and sponsored by the Faith and Sustainability program at the college. The plan is to increase the number of native plant gardens in Wooster and Wayne County. There were 60 inspired participants, and an Alliance was created to move forward with initiatives.

Along with Dan Bourne and Dick Wierwille I attended the Annual Environment and Spirituality Summit featuring a pod cast from Bill McKibbon. The Summit explored the theme of building a Grounded Resistance to the continued push for the use of oil and gas and explored the moral and spiritual stakes of the climate crisis. We were encouraged to harness the power of organized people of faith to confront the fossil fuel industry and advance climate and environmental justice. Bill McKibbon is an author, educator, and environmentalist who founded 350.org. the first global grassroots climate campaign, and who has recently helped found ThirdAct, to build a progressive organizing movement for people over the age of 60.

Betty Schuler a member of the Interfaith Peace and Justice committee wrote an article for the UU church newsletter. I have included it in the Trinity Topics for our congregation to read. She gives a clear overview of what Third Act Ohio is all about.

We can all have a “Third Act” to show gratitude for God’s gift of this world to us.

Margaret Bourne

QR code links to Betty Schuler’s article: