

Trinity United Church of Christ
"Embracing and Celebrating God's Love"
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January 2026
Trinity UCC Topics

There weren't three of them, they weren't kings, they didn't have camels, and we don't know they were men. In Matthew, the Magi come to a house in Bethlehem; there is no manger, no shepherds, and no heavenly host. Three gifts are named: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. In Isaiah 60, gold, frankincense, and camels are listed among the tribute of nations and kings. The story comes from "May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service. For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper" (Psalm 72:11).

A line is drawn in the world of Spirit. I'm glad that you make it over the threshold of the church doors and into the Sanctuary. Now I encourage you to make it over the important threshold of experiencing God's blessing in your life. We are the new world. Just because we have hope-it doesn't mean that it will be easy. Having a baby is a hopeful, joyful event. Having a baby is also a scary challenge!

Setting your mind on doing God's will is a hopeful, joyful decision.

Go out there and shine! Not just on December 25 or the January 6th day of Epiphany. You know the kind of life Jesus lived. You know what Jesus stood for. You know his mind and his kindness.

So go out and let YOUR light shine.

Open yourself to the love, joy, peace and hope of the season.

Arise and Shine your light has come!

Your Partner in Christ's Ministry,

Rev. Dr. Kevan S. Franklin



Rev. Dr. Kevan Franklin, *Senior Minister*
Suzanne Feltner, *Faith Formation and Arts Director*
Joi Griffith, *Administrative Assistant*
Luke Tegtmeier, *Organist*
Phil Starr/Jack Senn, *Business Managers*
Yulia Allison, *Nursery Staff*
Connie Plant/Larry Keiner, *Custodians*



<https://www.facebook.com/trinityuccwooster/>



Visit us online at
www.trinityucc.org



www.youtube.com/trinityuccwooster

JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE
10:30am



All Services are available online on Facebook and YouTube
Live services are available on our website at
TrinityUCC.org

January 4
Holy Communion
“The Riches of God’s Grace”
Ephesians 1:3-14

January 11
“Go Around Doing Good”
Acts 10:34-43

January 18
“God is Faithful”
1 Corinthians 1:1-9

January 25
“Humility”
1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Financial Position November 2025
Trinity UCC Wooster – “Embracing and Celebrating God’s Love”

	Current Month		**2025 Year to date**		**Last year actual**
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	YTD
Income	\$16,961	\$38,320	\$298,098	\$309,467	\$196,225
Expenses	\$26,914	\$30,924	\$321,645	\$356,629	\$285,943
Net	(\$9,953)	\$7,396	(\$23,547)	(\$47,162)	(\$89,718)

Comments:

We end up with a deficit right at \$10k for November. This brings our YTD deficit to \$131,193 as we have already included Endowment support of \$107,646 in our YTD numbers. Our Electric continues to run over budget we are \$2400 over YTD. For building maintenance we incurred \$262 for the locksmith shop to repair our outer doors.

We are in a position where we need a strong December to make up a lot of deficit. We appeal to our members and friends to consider making additional donations throughout the fourth quarter to help our deficit position!

Building Repair Fund/Kitchen Renovation Balance: - (\$243,437)

Please continue to give towards the Kitchen Renovation. 2025 is the second of a three year fundraising campaign. 2026 will be our final and third year. Many thanks for those who have contributed towards the project.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM BALANCE: \$24,920.

Trinity Breakfast program – 30 years
Established in the summer of 1995.
Our breakfast program is 30 years old!



Trinity is the place where we come together to celebrate gifts of each other. We come together in our brightest and darkest hours, we also come together to dream about a bright tomorrow. In all of the craziness today, Trinity is the place to come to be a ray of sunshine for each other.



It is very good to be in the season of Epiphany beginning on Tuesday, January 6th! It will be good to get to celebrate the “Sundays after the Epiphany” each week until of course Transfiguration Sunday and then Ash Wednesday and Lent begin.

Speaking of that, there are lots of things going on this month, and hopefully you look at the calendar in Topics to see all that is happening so far. More things will be coming up in the future, like book studies, different lunch gatherings, ways to connect with others and of course, worship services are very important and a good way to reach out to each other. If you have ideas of ways to get together, please let me know.

So, hope the weather stays good and we can spend time together.

Peace to all!

Suzanne Feltner, Director of Faith Formation and Arts



January Birthdays!

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Daniel Montelione 3rd | Mark Blough 19th |
| Linda Baney 4th | Valerie Anderson 26th |
| Larry Patterson 6th | Jim Newman 26th |
| Robbie Chipka 8th | Katie Dossi (Holland) 31st |
| Jeanette Ziegler 8th | |
| John Paul Schmidt 8th | |
| Joe Kirk 9th | |
| Jodi Kirk 10th | |
| Vicki Anderson 11th | |
| Marc Bertsch 11th | |
| Carol Eberhart 11th | |
| Gabrielle Wright 11th | |
| Thomas Sarbach 18th | |



Please check in with Tammy Hoffman before the Annual Meeting

ACTION REQUIRED

Help Us Map Our Ministries

Are you the leader, chairperson, or head of a **Group, Mission, or Committee** at the church?

Tammy Hoffman needs to hear from you!

PLEASE SEND:

- Your Group or Committee Name
- A Brief Description of Its Mission

CONTACT:

Tammy Hoffman

hoffmans2750@gmail.com

Thank you for helping us strengthen and connect our church community!

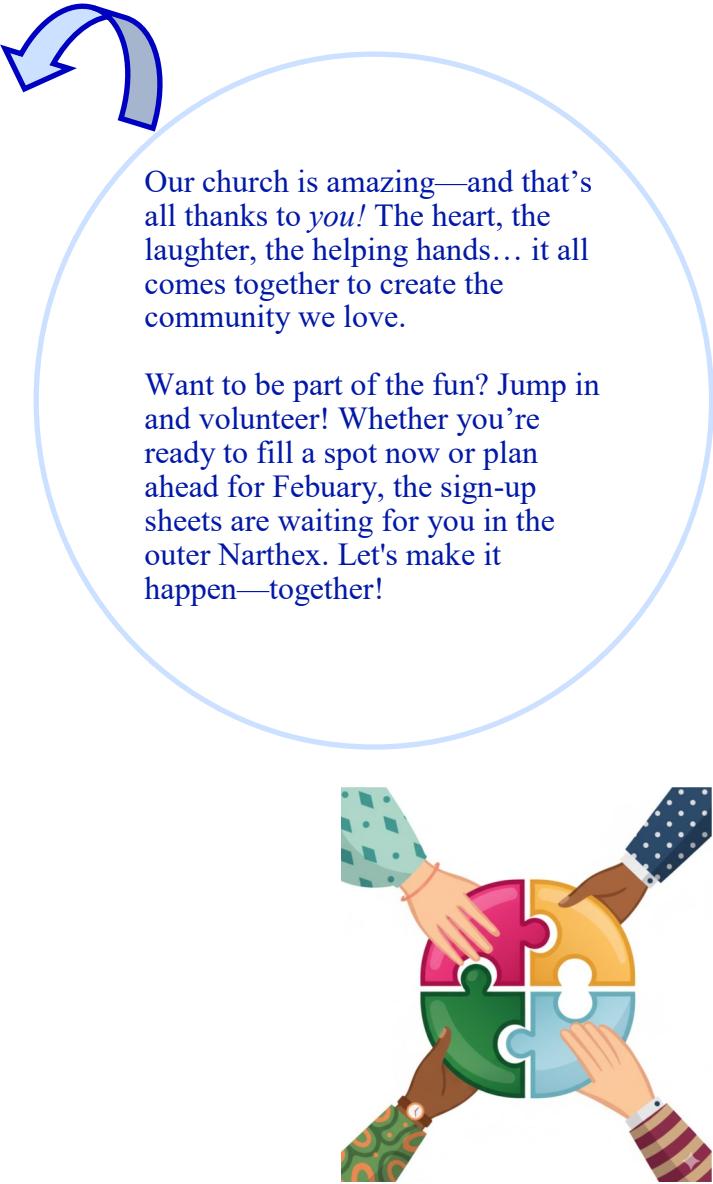
✦ A New Year, A New Opportunity to Serve ✦

As we step into a brand new year, it's the perfect time to reflect on the blessings we've received and think about how we can share them with others. One of the most meaningful ways to do this is by serving in our Sunday worship services.

We have **four key volunteer opportunities** that help make our services welcoming, beautiful, and full of community spirit:

- 📖 **Layreader** – Bring the Scriptures to life by reading during the service.
- 🌸 **Altar Flowers** – Dedicate or provide flowers to adorn our altar in honor, memory, or celebration.
- 🤝 **Usher / Greeter** – Extend a warm welcome to everyone who enters, assist with seating, and collect the offering.
- ☕ **Coffee Hour Host** – Prepare and serve refreshments after worship, creating space for fellowship and connection.

Whether you've volunteered before or are trying it for the first time, your gifts and presence make a real difference. Every act of service strengthens our church family and builds a vibrant community of faith and love. **Sign up today** on the sheets in the narthex, or call the church office to reserve your spot. Let's make this year one filled with service, fellowship, and shared joy!



Our church is amazing—and that's all thanks to *you!* The heart, the laughter, the helping hands... it all comes together to create the community we love.

Want to be part of the fun? Jump in and volunteer! Whether you're ready to fill a spot now or plan ahead for February, the sign-up sheets are waiting for you in the outer Narthex. Let's make it happen—together!

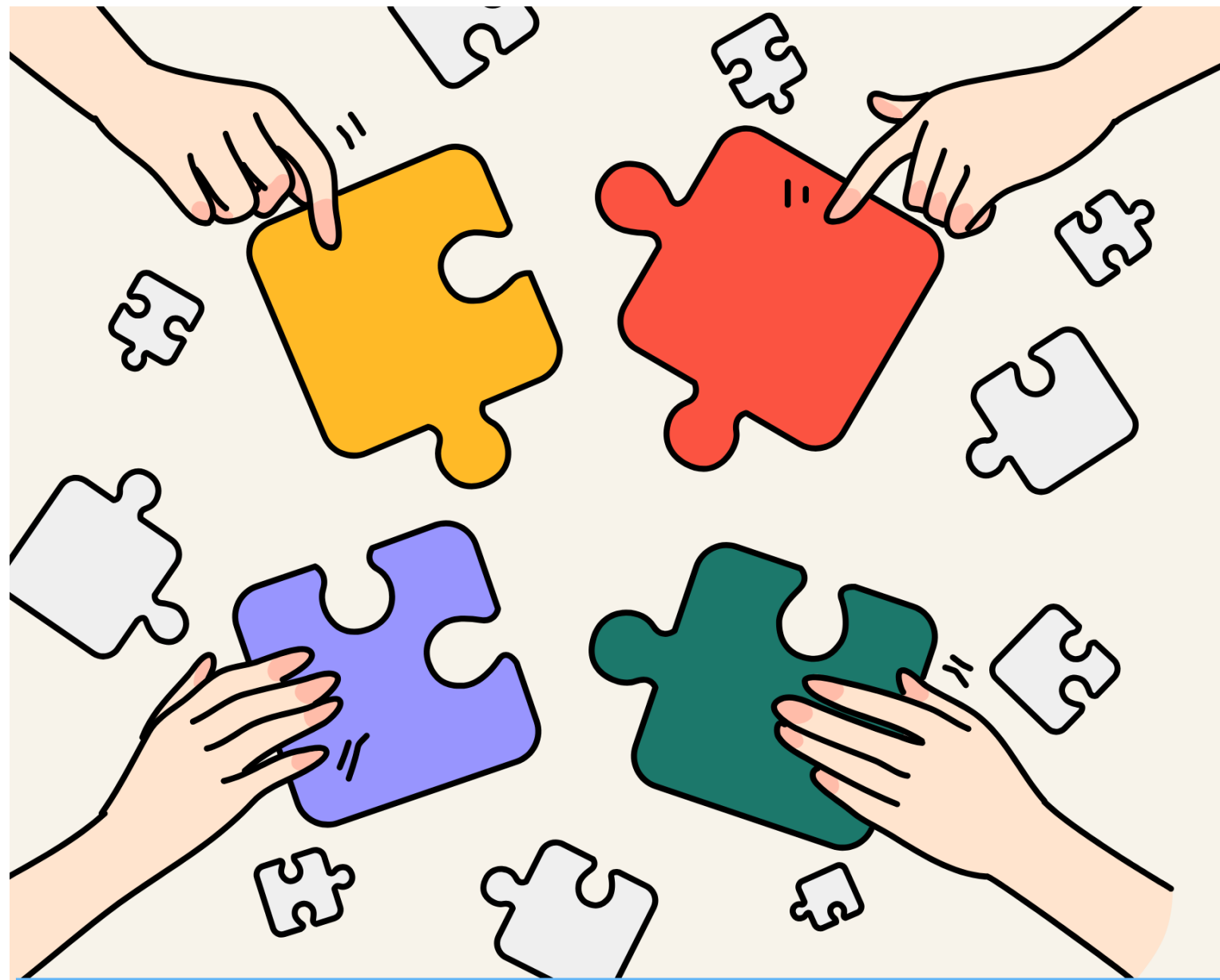
Looking Ahead!

- Men's Breakfast in Fellowship Hall 8am - January 3
- Faith Formation Meeting 6pm - January 6
- Consistory Meeting 5:30pm - January 13
- Luncheon after Worship Speaker for United Church Homes - January 18
- Martin Luther King Celebration @ First Presbyterian Church 7pm - January 19
- Mission Team Meeting on Zoom 5:15pm - January 20
- Women's Lunch @ Broken Rocks 11:30am - January 21
- Fellowship Friday Game Night 7-9pm - January 23
- Coffee Shop Worship 10:30am - January 25
- Trinity's Annual Meeting - January 25

January Daily National and World Observances

- Jan 1 – New Year's Day / World Day of Peace
- Jan 2 – Science Fiction Day / Day of Ancestry and Culture
- Jan 3 – Festival of Sleep Day / Memento Mori Day
- Jan 4 – National Trivia Day / World Braille Day
- Jan 5 – National Bird Day / National Whipped Cream Day
- Jan 6 – Epiphany / Three Kings Day
- Jan 7 – Orthodox Christmas
- Jan 8 – Elvis Presley's Birthday / Earth's Rotation Day
- Jan 9 – Law Enforcement Appreciation Day / Day of Mourning (Iran)
- Jan 10 – Religious Freedom Day / World Hindi Day
- Jan 11 – Human Trafficking Awareness Day / International Thank-You Day
- Jan 12 – National Pharmacist Day / Zanzibar Revolution Day
- Jan 13 – Korean American Day / Lohri (India)
- Jan 14 – Ratification Day / World Logic Day
- Jan 15 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day / Armed Forces Day (India)
- Jan 16 – Religious Freedom Day / World Religion Day

- Jan 17 – Benjamin Franklin Day / World Day for Migrants & Refugees
- Jan 18 – Sanctity of Human Life Day / World Day of the Snowman
- Jan 19 – National Popcorn Day / Timkat Eve (Ethiopia)
- Jan 20 – Inauguration Day / Timkat (Ethiopian Epiphany)
- Jan 21 – National Day of Racial Healing / International Hugging Day
- Jan 22 – Lunar New Year / Chinese New Year
- Jan 23 – National Handwriting Day
- Jan 24 – National Compliment Day / International Day of Education
- Jan 25 – National Opposite Day / Conversion of St. Paul
- Jan 26 – National Spouses Day / Australia Day
- Jan 27 – Holocaust Remembrance Day
- Jan 28 – Data Privacy Day / International LEGO Day
- Jan 29 – Religious Freedom Day / Lantern Festival
- Jan 30 – National Freedom Day / School Day of Non-Violence & Peace
- Jan 31 – National Backward Day / Street Children's Day



Are you puzzled as to what to do during these dark winter days? A solution is in the Trinity Parlor/Library. There are many puzzles on the shelves just waiting for you to borrow. See someone in the office to open the Parlor so you can browse through the selection and take one or two home to try. Have fun! Stay warm!

Happy New Year Trinity

Last year was so full of working on the outdoor landscaping around Trinity that there was not too much time for quiet thinking or reflection. Now that we are in the waiting and anticipating phase to see how beautiful the gardens will look in the spring, it is time to renew our interests and learn new things.

I have three books to recommend to you while the winter winds blow, and you can spend time reading. Brew a cup of tea, grab a cozy blanket, and find your favorite reading spot to explore these worthy writers.

This is a book by a local author that Dan bought for me at the Buckeye Book Fair. The Author, Danae Wolfe lives in Wooster on Christmas Run and I hope someday to meet her in person. Danae is speaking to my personal experience and interest in creating a yard that increases biodiversity, creates a cleaner environment, and makes our world more diverse and beautiful. She wrote, *Grass Isn't Greener* The *Everyday Conservationist's Guide to Bringing Nature to Your Yard*.

Here is a review written by Douglass W. Tallamay, author of Nature's Best Hope: Danae Wolf reveals the future -when conservation will be done en masse by the private citizens on private property. Wolfe captures this paradigm shift with all the detail you need to create a model ecological landscape. Kudos to Grass Isn't Greener for helping speed along this essential transition.

The next two books are by the same author, Robin Wall Kimmerer.

I am offering reviews from sources online as they are better than anything I can come up with

Reviews for Robin Wall Kimmerer's

[*Braiding Sweetgrass*](#) and her recent work, [*The Serviceberry*](#), are overwhelmingly positive, praising Kimmerer's lyrical blend of Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge (botany/ecology), and personal storytelling to offer a powerful, healing vision of ecological renewal through [reciprocity and gift economies](#), urging readers to see the Earth as a generous provider and us as kin, fostering deep connection and responsibility, though some find it best for naturalists.

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Core Themes: Combines science (botany) with Native American teachings, focusing on the "Three Sisters" (corn, beans, squash) as gifts, fostering gratitude, and recognizing plants/animals as teachers.

Reader Experience: Transformative, slow-growing, encourages mindfulness, makes you walk differently, offers hope in ecological crisis, and provides a spiritual/scientific framework for living sustainably.

Praise: "Mesmerizing storyteller," "compelling prose," "mythic," "wise," "healing vision".

The Serviceberry (Book/Essay)

Core Themes: Uses the serviceberry as a model for a "gift economy," contrasting it with extractive capitalism, and advocating for mutual aid and interdependence.

Reader Experience: A "small book with a big message," concise yet profound, offers a needed shift in perspective from consumerism to citizenship with the Earth, a "buoy" during hard times.

Praise: "Poignant and timely," "brilliant," "beautiful way of looking at the natural world," "threat to... consumer capitalism".

Overall Consensus (Both Works)

Author's Style: Accessible, emotionally resonant, clear, beautiful, generous, and inspiring.

Impact: Changes how people view the world, combats disconnection from nature, promotes active environmental stewardship, and offers concrete ways to live more harmoniously with the Earth.

Key Takeaway: A call to see the world not as resources to exploit, but as a community of givers and receivers, shifting from individualism to kinship.

Happy reading and let us know what you think of these books. If there is interest, we can explore them further with a book study or café style discussion. I am also thinking about inviting our local writer, Danae Wolfe to be a speaker at Trinity in the Spring. She will inspire us to start planning for the summer gardening season.

All Best to the Trinity Family,
Margaret Bourne
Climate Justice Misson

ESPERANZA MISSION TRIP

It has been a few years
since we have had an
Esperanza Mission Trip

We would like to have
a group go in 2026.

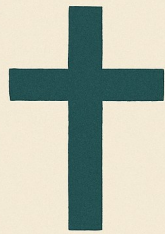
Right now, we are determining
the interest.

Please contact either Phil Starr
or Steve Schroer if you or
someone you know is interested

Optimal group size: 12 people

Tentative dates: March 14–21, 2026

www.esperanzaint.org



Lost Something?
We May Have Found it!

3 Phones (1 Blue, 2 Black)

2 Pair of Reading Glasses

1 Black Tablet

1 Accucheck Guide me

1 Green Hat

1 Blue Long Sleeve Shirt

If any of these items may be
yours stop in the church office

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ANNUAL REPORTS

Are due to Joi by January 9

- They can be:
- Emailed to: Trinityuccwooster1819@gmail.com
- Dropped off at the office: 150 E. North St.,
Wooster, OH 44691

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January Bible Study:

THE BOOK OF AMOS

Led by Liz Harris

4-Week Study | January 4–25

Exploring Amos's message on justice,
compassion, and faith in our troubled world

- Exploiting the Poor
- Denying Justice
- Corrupt Practices
- Living Lavishly

*"Seek good and not evil,
that you may live."*

— Amos 5:14

All are welcome to join!