



Trinity In Touch

May 2025

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Mission

Our Mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Vision

We strive to be an inclusive faith community that extends God's love in our neighborhood and world.

Core Values

**Diversity & Inclusiveness:
Seeking to affirm every person as a child of God.**

**Scripture, Tradition,
Experience and Reason:
Searching for truth
in our faith community.**

**Peace & Justice:
Striving for positive social
change in our
neighborhood and world.**

**Trinity UMC
1100 Lake Drive SE
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616.456.7168
office@grtumc.org**

Behind the Worship: Rituals and Relevance

The Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Prayer has always been at the heart of Christian worship. It's where our worship breathes. It slows us down, holds us still, and opens something in us that the rest of life tries to keep closed. Prayer is not just background noise, but rather a sacred action that shapes who we are and how we see the world. The Pastoral Prayer (congregational prayer) and the Lord's Prayer have been a staple in worship for generations, not out of habit, but because they still speak with power and relevance. They center us. They connect us. And they call us to something deeper.

The pastoral prayer in worship goes all the way back to the first century church, where leaders would lift up prayers on behalf of the people who had gathered. It was never about flowery words or spiritual theatrics. It was about naming the concerns of the world, the hopes of the people, and the needs of the community, praying for both local and global concerns, especially the ones that can seem too heavy to pray for on our own. This tradition of prayer has continued throughout the centuries, eventually becoming a regular part of Methodist worship thanks to our Anglican roots. John Wesley believed prayer, especially intercessory prayer, was a means of grace, a way we grow closer to God and one another.

When we offer the Pastoral Prayer today, we are continuing that work. It is not just the pastor talking. It is the whole congregation's voice gathered up and offered to God. We pray for people we know, and people we will never meet. We pray for healing, for peace, for courage, and sometimes, when the world is especially rough, we simply pray for strength to keep going. It is a holy pause in the service where we acknowledge that this world is both beautiful and broken and we dare to believe that God cares about both.

Then comes the Lord's Prayer. This is not just a tradition. It is a teaching. When Jesus' disciples asked him how to pray (Luke 11), he did not give them a formula to copy or a speech to memorize. He gave them a prayer intended to realign their hearts and expectations. This prayer, that we pray every week, is a chance to return from all of the ways that the world has dinged and dented and torn us up during the week. In the Lord's Prayer we are reminded that God is holy and close, that what we really need is daily bread and not hoarded abundance, that forgiveness is both something we receive and something we are called to offer. It reminds us that we are not praying as individuals, but as a community.



Early Christians prayed the Lord's Prayer often. Some even prayed it several times a day. By the second century, it had become a central part of Christian worship, not because they loved repetition, but because the prayer kept them grounded and it helped to shape who they were becoming.

Today, these two prayers work together to hold us steady. One speaks from the heart of the congregation to God. The other speaks from the heart of Jesus to the church. They are not interruptions in the service or bridges from one bulletin item to the next. They are anchors. They help us stay rooted in grace, in honesty, and in each other.

So next time we pray in worship, lean in. Don't just recite: listen, feel, join in. These ancient words have wrapped around the weary, lifted the despairing, and echoed in every place from candlelit cathedrals and to quiet hospital rooms. And, as we continue to pray, they echo through us too.

Grace and peace,



Pastor Mike



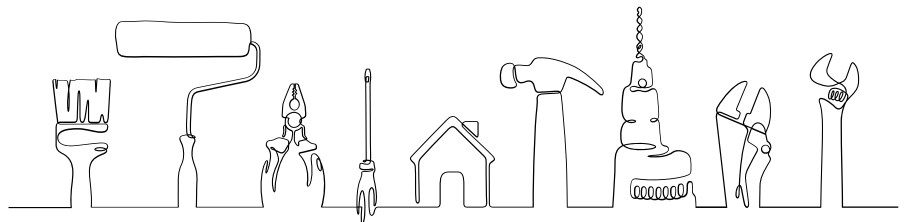
Ministry Spotlight

Behind the scenes of every Sunday service, community event, and special gathering, there's a dedicated group working quietly to keep our church home in excellent condition — our Church Building Team. This faithful crew takes care of ongoing repairs, improvements, and maintenance projects that ensure our building remains safe, welcoming, and functional for everyone.

From fixing leaks and updating lighting to painting rooms and upgrading facilities, the Building Team is always ready to lend a hand. Their hard work often goes unnoticed, but their impact touches every ministry and visitor who walks through our doors.

We're grateful for their commitment, skill, and servant hearts — and we're always looking for more helping hands. If you enjoy working with tools, solving problems, or simply want to serve in a practical way, we'd love to have you on board.

Interested in learning more or getting involved? Reach out to the church office to find out how you can help.





A heartfelt thank you to Kim Longworth for creating the beautiful Easter paraments. Your talent and dedication brought a special touch to our celebration—thank you for blessing our church in this way!



Finances

Dear Trinity Members and Friends,

Thank you for your faithful support. Your giving, prayer, and participation are vital resources that enable Trinity to be the conduit of God's justice, hope and love to our neighborhood and beyond.

The year to date expenses included high winter bills for utilities and snow plowing.

Monthly financial reports are available in the church office and you may contact our treasurer, Joy Murphy, for a copy or if you have questions.

Submitted by: Pros Tumonong, Chair-Finance Committee

As we think about ways we can love our neighbors, it's easy to be overwhelmed and uncertain as we try to digest and respond to the daily onslaught of news. Where do we start when so much seems out of our control?

Continue to follow the Justice Resource document for more resources for areas you are passionate about. The justice document is updated weekly and you can send suggested resources to staff at justice@grtumc.org.



Justice Resources

Find Our Latest Social Justice Resources Online



tinyurl.com/TrinityUMC-Justice

Our Google Doc is updated regularly and includes resources, organizations & direct action steps.

Email suggestions or links to:
justice@grtumc.org



Trinity UMC celebrates the beautiful diversity of the human community. We affirm the sacred worth of each person as a recipient of God's love and grace. As followers of Christ, we are an open and inclusive congregation. We live this out by welcoming into full participation all persons regardless of gender, race, national origin, physical or mental abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status or economic condition.

Intention Word



Our intention word for May is Leap. Not sure what an intention word is? Pastor Mike wrote an introduction to this concept in September 2022's Newsletter. Check it out online at: <https://bit.ly/Sep2022Newsletter>

Church Family

ALTAR FLOWERS

May 4 - Trinity staff in appreciation of our wonderful congregation. We are grateful for each of you!
May 11 - Linda Burpee and Sara Smolenski in loving memory of our mothers - Mary Smolenski and Pat Burpee.
May 18 - Laura Slade in honor of Laura and Paul Slade's 34th anniversary and in memory of Ernie Patterson.
May 25 - Jeanne Morton in honor of her great grandson's 7th birthday and the Morton's anniversary.

CONDOLENCES

Condolences to Kip Smalligan on the passing of his mother, Doti Browning.
2445 E Collier Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
kipsmalligan@gmail.com

PRAYERS AND CARE

A big thank you from Judy Conner for the prayers she received. She is doing well and things are looking good.



Opportunities to Engage

The 2024-2025 Program Year is winding down. Have no fear though; we're jumping right into Summer 2025!



Key dates to keep in mind:

Thursday, May 15 | Last TNT for the Season

This includes Chancel Choir, Youth Choir & Bells, TNT Dinners & TNT Nursery Care.

Sunday, May 18 | Last Children & Worship & Kids Connect Classes (10:15am-11:15am)

A huge thank you to all our teachers for leading our Pre-K to 5th grade students this year. We will celebrate them on Milestone Sunday! Keep reading for information on an exciting offering for the summer months!

Sunday, May 18 | Last Faith Formation (11:30am-12:30pm) Hour

This includes TrinityKids, Youth Fellowship, and Adult offerings. Watch for more information on weekday and fellowship opportunities during the summer months. Appreciation shout out to all the TrinityKids & Youth Parents and other adults that lead children, youth, and adult classes this program year!

Sunday, May 25 | Worship & Lunch at Family Camp

See the Family Camp section of the newsletter for more information on visiting camp for the day! Director of Worship Arts, Randy Burghart, will be preaching at Trinity this Sunday for folks staying local.

Friday, June 6 | God's Naturehood: Adult Edition (1:00pm-2:00pm) at Prairie Wolf Park

Designed for Trinity families & friends ages 18 & up, our Prairie Wolf Park meet-up will be a great opportunity to visit a new park, get to know members of your Trinity family better, and get your daily steps in.

Sunday, June 8 | Milestone & Graduation Sunday

We will be celebrating graduates and welcoming new members as well as highlighting congregational milestones from February to May 2025. Join us in worship and then for a cupcake reception afterwards!

Saturday, June 14 | God's Naturehood: Family Edition (10:00am-11:00am) at Huff Park

Designed for Trinity families & friends with kiddos ages 12 and under, our Huff Park meet-up will feature a walk on the amazing board walk trails, fellowship, snacks, and some time at the nature playground!

Sunday, June 15 | First God's Naturehood: Sunday Kids Edition (10:15am-11:15am) Class

Back for six select Sundays this summer, this during worship class gives kiddos ages Pre-K to 5th grade an opportunity to learn about what God has made by examining different parts of creation, digging into amazing science facts, and (when weather permits) spending time outside exploring the Naturehood right around our building!

Saturday, June 21 | Youth Movie & Mall Adventure

An all new adventure for 6th to 12th grade youth, we'll meet at Woodland Mall for a fun scavenger hunt, mall court food, and an epic movie! More details coming soon.

Sunday, June 22 | Whitecaps Game

Join your Trinity family at LMCU Ballpark on Sunday, June 22 as the West Michigan Whitecaps take on the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers. Purchase your tickets and vouchers today! The deadline is May 14 at 12:00pm.

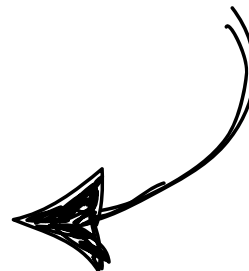
Use our online form at tinyurl.com/TUMCWhitecaps2025 or contact Laura for help registering.

... and this is only a taste of what's coming this summer! Resources for growing your faith while traveling, dates for Party in the Park, and so much more are coming soon. Questions about any of these endings or beginnings? Contact your Trinity Staff!

God's Naturehood continues in May & June for both adults and families with kiddos!



Designed for Trinity families & friends with kiddos ages 12 and under, God's Naturehood: Family Edition is a time of fellowship & fun at a local park! All kids must be accompanied by an adult.



Saturday, June 14 from 10:00am-11:00am

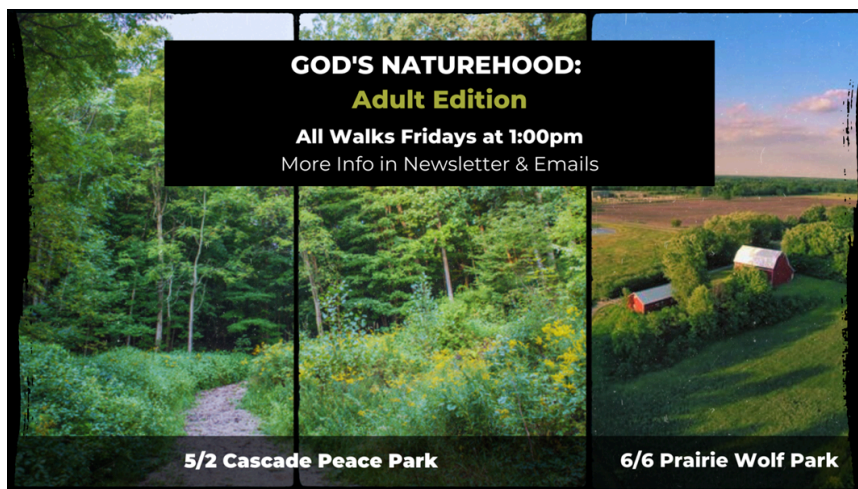
Huff Park at 1500 Aberdeen St NE, Grand Rapids 49505.

Meet at the southeast corner of the parking lot off of Aberdeen Street NE near the playground.

Our June meet-up will feature a walk on the amazing board walk trails and some time at the nature playground! Allergy friendly snacks will be available, but make sure to pack your own beverages! Great for those young families and those school age kiddos with lots of extra summer-time energy.



Designed for Trinity families & friends ages 18 & up, God's Naturehood: Adult Edition is a great opportunity to visit a new park, get to know members of your Trinity family better, and get your daily steps in. Our next walk is:



Friday, June 6 from 1:00pm-2:00pm

Prairie Wolf Park at 8555 Kalamazoo Ave SE, Caledonia 49316.

Park in the south corner of the Sheriff's Department lot and gather near the trail sign.

Reservations are requested but not required for all God's Naturehood walks. Contact Laura Johns, Director of Discipleship, at Ljohns@grtumc.org with questions or to RSVP.



GOD'S NATUREHOOD: Sunday Kids Edition

Join us in the Naturehood this summer!
Select Sundays | 10:15am-11:15am
June 15 & 22, July 13 & 20, August 17 & 24



Calling all Pre-K to 5th Grade kiddos! Come upstairs to the TrinityKids Room after Children's Moment on select Sundays this summer for a class with Ms. Laura, Ms. Annie, and other Protection Policy certified leaders.

We'll learn about what God has made by examining different parts of creation, digging into amazing science facts, and (when weather permits) spending time outside exploring the Naturehood right around our building! There will be crafts, games, science, stories, and more.

Grown-ups: Pick-up will be in the TrinityKids Room upstairs at 11:15am. If service ends early, please come check-out your kiddo before heading outside for Lemonade Stand.

Sunday Kids Edition will be offered June 15 & 22, July 13 & 20, August 17 & 24. Weekly programming will return in September.

Questions? Contact Laura Johns at l.johns@grtumc.org.

Call to Ministry! We still need grown-ups to help facilitate this class. It's a great opportunity to get to know our Trinity kiddos better without a long term commitment. Help out one week this summer or one week a month – it's up to you! Contact Laura for more information.



Spiritalk Book Club

Join us as we discuss & dissect a new book each month!
Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm at Trinity.
Contact Joy Murphy for more info at joymurphy@grtumc.org.

January 14 <u>The Cloisters</u> Katy Hays	February 11 <u>Vanishing Half</u> Brit Bennett	March 11 <u>The Women</u> Kristen Hannah	May 13 <u>Horse</u> Geraldine Brooks
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Spring 2025



Pints with the Pastor

Select Sundays at 6:00pm at Taco Borracho

Jan. 26	Feb. 23	March 23	April 27	May 18
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2025

You're invited to join us for our final Pints with the Pastor of this program year on May 18 at 6:00pm. This gathering is an opportunity for all of us to get a drink, get some dinner, and get to know each other better. We're meeting up at Taco Borracho (755 Michigan St NE). No RSVP required. Contact Pastor Mike at m.desotell@grtumc.org with questions.



It's a Wrap. What's Next?

Sunday, May 18 at 11:30am

Adult Faith Formation Class
Discovery Room

Let's connect about what we've explored this program year and dream about the future together. There will be opportunities for feedback as well as summer & fall teasers!

EXTRA SPECIAL SNACKS

That's right! The Adult Ministries Council wants to hear from you and are not above a little bribery. Join us for food, fellowship & discussion!

We've had an amazing program year with lots of fantastic Adult Faith Formation offerings. Make sure our last class is on your calendar... (drum roll please)...

On May 18, we're hosting a discussion called: **It's a Wrap. What's Next?** All Trinity adults are invited to connect about what we've explored this program year, provide feedback, and dream about the future together. There will be summer updates and fall teasers. The Adult Ministries Council wants to hear from you, so an added incentive is that there will be treats! That's right, extra snacks – so plan on joining us!

One final reminder, on May 11 – Mother's Day – there will be no Faith Formation Hour. We've found in past years that many folks have conflicts this week between celebrations and other commitments.

A Trinity favorite is back! Each Sunday after worship starting June 15, head out the Calkins door and gather on the lawn for cold beverages and great conversation.

The Lemonade Stand is an opportunity for our congregation to step out into the community and get to know each other - and our neighbors - better.

Call to Ministry! We are still finalizing our volunteer crew for the summer, so if you would like to take a Sunday to help serve, there will be a paper signup in the Parlor kitchen soon or email Laura Johns at l.johns@grtumc.org.



Milestone Sundays

SHARING MILESTONE MOMENTS
IN THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

CELEBRATE GRADUATES & WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



A milestone is a meaningful, memorable moment in the life of an individual, family or community. Here at Trinity, we want to recognize those moments, share them together, and find God's presence in the everyday.

Our second Milestone Sunday of 2025 is June 9 and we will be celebrating any milestones from February to May, 2025. Our Milestone Moment will be the honoring of graduates and the welcoming of new members. We will also post select honorees on the screen and do a group blessing for all honorees.

Have a milestone to share? Fill out our online form at <https://tinyurl.com/TUMCMilestone06-2025>, email Laura at l.johns@grtumc.org, or put a note on your Connection Card.

Families with High School Grads: Please let Laura & Annie know if your student will be in attendance and what size sweatshirt they prefer. We cannot wait to celebrate with them!

A cupcake reception will follow the worship service.



Join your Trinity family at LMCU Ballpark on Sunday, June 22 as the West Michigan Whitecaps take on the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers.

NEW THIS YEAR: With changes to the ballpark, the Lumbermen's BBQ Area with the all-you-can-eat BBQ buffet is no longer available to groups. Other group options include new deck or suite tickets with meal plans that are much more expensive. We will be trying something new this year, knowing we can always reevaluate before next summer...

We have reserved seats for the 2:00pm game. We will be in the same area on the third base side (Section 120) as last two years ensuring protection from the sun most of the afternoon and accessible seat options for anyone who needs them.



Whitecaps Game
Sunday, June 22, 2025 at 2:00pm

"Take me out to the ball game; take me out with the crowd!"



To ensure no one goes hungry – a Methodist tradition – we are adding an option for you to select a special group voucher to add to your tickets. You can mix & match options with your tickets, but once our tickets are reserved in late May, you will not be able to change your selection. Options are:

- \$17 – Box seat ticket only
- \$23 – Box seat ticket and one hot dog & one 16oz soda
- \$33 – Box seat ticket and your choice of one hamburger, cheeseburger, or brat plus chips & one 16oz soda

All the vouchers save you on taxes and are less than the face value of the food items with the hot dog & soda voucher representing a 50% savings! You can turn in the voucher at any point before or during the game at concessions to collect your items.

Purchase your tickets and vouchers today! Trinity has options for a 20% discount as well as additional accommodations should anyone need them. **The deadline to purchase your tickets is May 14 at 12:00pm.**

Use our online form at tinyurl.com/TUMCWhitecaps2025 or contact Laura for help registering.



TRINITY FAMILY CAMP
Friday-Monday | May 23-26, 2025

*Light the fire in my weary soul.
Fan the flame make my spirit whole.
Lord You know where I've been,
so light the fire, in my heart again.*

Light The Fire | Song by Sonicflood

Come to Family Camp this year – give your weary soul rest, feel the spirit move, and let God reignite the fire in your heart. Come sit by our campfire knowing God loves you – no matter where you've been and no matter where you're going. Come – light the fire with us!

Registered Campers: The reservations are in and we have an amazing group signed up this year! It's going to be a fantastic weekend on the West Michigan lakeshore. Laura will be emailing you lodging & meals confirmation, as well as a pack list, schedule of events, and other key info by mid-May. If you have questions in the meantime, do not hesitate to reach out.

All Trinity Members: Join our overnight campers for a day around the fire! On Saturday, you can stop by for a whole host of activities including crafts, games, and a brats & dogs dinner. On Sunday, join us at 11:00am for worship in the South Pavilion featuring camp music favorites. A delicious lunch will be provided after the worship service to all campers and visitors. After lunch, stick around for family activities, a hike to the lake, and more!

There is a suggested donation of \$10 per person for any camp meals. Please RSVP with number of visitors and any dietary needs / allergies by using the food section of our online registration form or by emailing Laura.

Interested in Registering? Contact Laura ASAP about options. There may still be a spot or two available as part of our group booking.

Contact:
Laura Johns, Director of Discipleship, ljohns@grtumc.org

The Youth Connection Corner

YOUTH EVENTS FOR THE MONTH OF



It's May! It's May! The sun is out and summer is just around the corner. We've got lots coming up, too, so check it out below!

Mark your calendars for...

Pastor Post-It Sunday – Sunday, May 11th

It's the final Pastor Post-It Sunday of the semester! Let's finally stump Pastor Mike with a new word on this date up in Pellowe at 9:40AM! See you there!

No Youth Group – Sunday, May 11th

May 11th sure has a lot going on! Not only will it be a Pastor Post-It but due to Mother's Day there will be **no youth group** that day!

End of the Semester – Sunday, May 18th

I have had an absolutely wonderful semester with Trinity's Youth! We've had some amazing conversations, lots of laughs and, of course, a lot of fun. Our final Youth Group for the Spring 2025 Semester will take place on this day and we will have a Sunday Funday—while also talking about plans for the summer.

Summer Plans!

Just because we won't be having Youth Group it doesn't mean we have to say goodbye for the whole summer. I've got some fun plans in the works for exciting things to keep us connected during the summer months, more info to come to an email and newsletter near you but here is a fun teaser:

- Summer 2025 Adventure: Mall & Movie Day – Saturday June 21st 1:30PM – 5:00PM
- Youth Run the Lemonade Stand & Get a special treat after! – Sunday Jul 13th & Aug 3rd

As we head into May, I ask that you keep all of our wonderful Youth in your prayers as they navigate the end of the semester and finish the school year strong!

Annie Slabaugh, Youth Director - a.slabaugh@grtumc.org.



Community Ministries



Community Ministries Sunday and more...

This past Sunday (5/4/2025), was our Community Ministries Program Spring Appeal Sunday. If you missed it we encourage you to go to You Tube or the Trinity UMC Facebook and watch the service as we talk about the great work happening in our program. We talked about the transformation of the heart from Saul to Paul. Same person with a new awakening and mission from God to help grow the church. Along that journey we learn about an encourager and mentor named Barnabas. The question we asked the church was how you can be a Barnabas to your own families and networks. Who can you mentor or encourage today?

We will be sending out our Community Ministries Program Spring Appeal later this week. We encourage you to read through the material showing what we have done in our programming this last year. We hope that one way you can support and encourage the work that the Community Ministries Program is doing by prayerfully considering making a financial gift to help us continue to do the work that makes a difference in our community. There are also some other upcoming opportunities to help serve and support our program. Please check out these opportunities below. We also want to give a shout out to all of those who already support our program and those businesses that also have gone out of their way to help support our program. A special shout out to **Everything Ink** and **BAI Foundation** for seeing and appreciating the work that we do for our community. Thank you everyone for your support!

Upcoming Opportunities to Engage

- Read the CM Program Spring Appeal Newsletter and make a donation to financially support our Community Ministries Program.
- Volunteer on **May 22nd** to help offer hospitality for the **Spring Congress Music Concert** at Trinity UMC. There are multiple opportunities to help.
- Save the Date for the **"A Night to Remember"** Community Ministries Program Dinner on Nov. 7th. Enjoy this free evening with great food, music and stories
- Volunteer at the **Congress Elementary "Fiesta"** end of the year celebration on **May 29th @5pm!** Help serve food, help at activity stations and be a part of this amazing event!
- **Volunteer with our Kids Club and Transitions Program** on Wednesday evenings (Oct-April) with our CM Program volunteer team. Set up a time with CM Program Director, Matt Witkowski, to discuss the opportunity and see if you would be a good fit for our program team. We are looking for positive, engaged individuals who can bring ideas and energy to our team.

To discuss any or all of these opportunities, please email Matt Witkowski at m.witkowski@grtumc.org or reach him by phone at (616) 550-2418. Thank you so much for prayerfully considering supporting our program through a financial gift and volunteering for opportunities that give back to the community. We are so excited to look to the summer Faith on the Fly activities and planning ahead for a great 2025-26 program year!

A graphic of the word "COMMUNITY" in large, colorful, 3D block letters. The letters are blue, orange, blue, blue, pink, green, pink, and red. They are set against a dark, textured background that looks like a chalkboard.