



The Christian Flame

October - November 2025

Bairdford, Janes
Trinity Brackenridge Charge

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The mission of the United Methodist Church is "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

Luke 17:5-6

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" ⁶The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a ^[a] mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

Is It Enough?

When people start talking about not having enough, speaking of scarcity, my ears start ringing, with scripture. It is an uncomfortable and irritating part of being a pastor and student of the Book. As I have listened in individual conversations and group gatherings the mustard seed keeps coming up.

A mustard seed is no bigger than a speck. We often read Jesus' mustard seed talk as ridiculing, scolding, or, at the very least, challenging the disciples lack of faith. We might hear that in Jesus' tone except, of course, we know that Jesus gave of his time to these men. Again and again, he spent time with these fellows whether they were full of faith, or all dried out.

The disciples were not really one or the other. Sometimes they had enough faith to drop their fishing nets, leave their former lives behind, and follow a man they hardly knew. Other times you could catch them rolling their eyes when Jesus finished a story, because yet again they had missed the point. Sometimes a disciple was someone who could walk on water, and sometimes a disciple was someone who straight sank until the goodness of the Lord grabbed him by the wrists and kept him from drowning. Sometimes a disciple was one who risked his neck to stay faithful, and sometimes a disciple was someone who fled from the scene as soon as soldiers showed up to take God away. I imagine this roller coaster ride of faith was making the disciples a bit sick of their own selves, and that is what prompted them with queasy stomachs to beg with Jesus, "Increase our faith! Please!" They were tired of being so up, then down, so right, then wrong, so brave, then squeamish, so sure, then wary.

"Increase our faith!" the disciples demanded because they did not want to give up, but neither did they want to keep running, then tripping, standing, then falling. If only they had more faith, surely life would settle down, and finally they'd be disciples for real.

But Jesus says to them, "All you need is a mustard seed of faith. A teeny, tiny mustard seed amount will do." For Jesus knew that, as many times as these disciples had sunk, there were other occasions on which they had soared, so when they asked for more, he told them, "You've already got enough." Even the most doubt-ravaged among us have got at least a kernel or a poppy seed of the good news.

The mustard seed is always there because we didn't plant it. God did. The seed of faith was a gift to you, and even in your darkest, most doubt-plagued hours, there are tiny, invisible roots that keep your seed buried deep within the soil of your becoming. It's not your responsibility to hold on to it. It holds on to you, even when you think it is lost for good.

So why aren't there more mulberry trees whizzing out towards the sea. If we've got the magic seed, where is the magic?

Often, God's magic doesn't always match our ideas about what needs to happen. Sometimes we even forget to even ask. We don't know the Power inside us, and so we don't even bother to look up at our world and ask the question, "What is it around here that needs to be uprooted? I think I'll place my hand on that and pray." We don't always see it clearly right now, but Healing is on its way. The light is coming. Just after the dark of night, you can count on the sunrise. It's coming, and it is already here. We are surrounded by goodness and miracle, but we forget to pay attention. The more often you notice that seed of faith, the more you'll be able to see what is already happening... And the rest is mystery. If it were any clearer, it would not be called faith: this slippery, elusive thing that carries us through the shadows and holds on to us no matter how often we lose our grip.

The disciples brought the smallness of their faith to him, he met their smallness with a power that made things happen.

You have the seed of faith and that the seed is enough, even when you can't see it.

It is in letting the smallness of our faith meet the smallness of the others faith in community that we begin to learn we are people of faith, despite the fears that constantly shrink us. We bring the smallness of what we've got right before Jesus' nose, and instead of shaming us, he smiles and says, "That'll do, child; that'll do." That is good news!



Church Charge Conference

The date of the annual Charge Conference for this year is **Tuesday, October 21, 7:00 pm** at **Bairdford UM Church, 387 Bairdford Road, Bairdford, PA 15006.**

All who attend the three churches in the charge are encouraged to attend, and all church members have the privilege to vote on matters before the charge.

At this meeting we will set the pastor's support for 2026, elect church leadership, and discuss the state of the church and denomination. All are welcome, please join us.

Congratulations & An Invitation to Help

We are excited to share some wonderful news! Thanks to the dedicated work of **Dale Cepull**, with input from the **Administrative Council**, Trinity has been awarded a **\$2,425 grant** from the Western PA Conference of the United Methodist Church. These funds will help us **re-start our Community Outreach Meals** (formerly known as the Spaghetti Dinner).

In a recent letter, the WPAUMC Trustees wrote:

"The last few years have been difficult for many congregations. One of the causes of that difficulty has been disaffiliation. We recognize that your congregation has experienced losses... As part of the Disaffiliation Agreement, and in addition to (other) requirements each church who disaffiliated paid 2% of ... the fair market value of all church owned property.

The purpose of the 2% fund was to cover administrative and legal costs during the disaffiliation process, and also to assist local churches, like (Trinity), so that ministries can be renewed, restored, and revitalized."

This grant will allow us to purchase **kitchen equipment and supplies** and provide **advertising** to spread the word about this important ministry.

Now we need your help! To bring these meals back to life, **volunteers are essential**. Whether you can help with cooking, serving, set-up, clean-up, or simply spreading the word, your support will make all the difference.

👉 "Please contact **Dale Cepull** if you are interested in helping to restart this ministry. The first order will be to decide our basic direction: purpose, cost, timing, menu, etc."

Together, we can renew this ministry and once again share food, fellowship, and God's love with our community.



Trinity UMC is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children, youth, and vulnerable adults who take part in our programs and ministries. We believe that every person is created in the image of God and is worthy of respect and protection.

At their recent meeting, the Administrative Council approved a Safe Sanctuary Policy, which affirms our commitment to preventing abuse and neglect. The policy sets clear guidelines for the conduct of staff, volunteers, and participants within our church community.

This important step is rooted in our calling to protect the most vulnerable among us and to reflect the love and care of Christ. Copies of the policy are available in the church office.

ALLEGHENY VALLEY ASSOCIATION
OF CHURCHES

Walk For Hunger

All the proceeds go to support local
hunger needs of the Allegheny
Valley through the
AVAC Food Bank and Emergency
Assistance programs.



1:30 Sunday, October 5, 2025
Sign up to sponsor our walker,
Karen Fazio



Submitted by Evey Callender

It's been a busy and exciting year for our fundraising team!

From January through June, we offered our monthly soup sales, which were met with wonderful support. After a well-deserved break in July, we returned in August with our Hoagie Sale and followed it up in September with our Stuffed Pepper Sale.

Looking ahead, October will be dedicated to preparing for the **Holiday Country Store** on the first Saturday in November, where our country kitchen and soup sale will be featured. Please note—there will be **no soup sale in October**.

Following the Fall Festival and Holiday Shop, we will kick off our annual **Christmas Cookie Tray Sale**. Once again, we'll offer two sizes:

- **Small Tray:** 2 ½ dozen cookies – \$25
- **Large Tray:** 5 dozen cookies – \$50

Each tray will be available with or without nuts. Order forms will be available beginning the last week of October.

✨ Volunteers for cookie baking are always welcome—your help makes this tradition possible! ✨ Contact Evelyn Callendar @724-316-7414

Thank you for your continued support—it makes all the difference!



All Saints Day is **November 2**. We invite everyone to give a SPECIAL OFFERING to Trinity Church in Memory of Family members, Friends, and Saints who have been meaningful in your life. Mark your envelope All Saints.

We will publish the list of all gifts received by November 2 in our Worship Announcements and the December/January Newsletter.



I just want to say Thank You once again, for the concern, the calls & cards, but especially the prayers from Pastor Zack and his family, from my family and friends, and from my caring wonderful

church family, for my recent eye surgery (Hopefully the first of only three). I do have faith that I'll get all my vision back at some point. Trinity does have Open Hearts, Open Minds and Open doors, and a major Praying congregation...I'm proof of that, with all my surgeries, because of my strong faith in God, and because of the many, many prayers from all of you!

I'm so proud to say I've been a member here for nearly 60 years... would be 65 if I had joined right after I started to attend!

Once again Thank You so very, very much... God bless each and every one of you!

Love you all. Fran Alter



Trunk or Treat & Fall Party
Saturday, October 25 2:00–4:00 PM

Submitted by Amanda Bartel

Join us for an afternoon of fun, fellowship, and community connection at our annual **Trunk or Treat!** Children from our church and community will enjoy going from car to car to collect treats in a safe, family-friendly environment.

We need your help to make this event a success!

- **Volunteers Needed:** Please consider participating by sitting by your car and passing out candy. Decorating your car is optional, but always adds extra fun!
- **Last Year's Lesson:** We had a wonderful turnout of children, but not enough cars passing out candy. Your participation makes a big difference!

After Trunk or Treat, stick around for our **Fall Party**, featuring games, prizes, and refreshments.

Ways You Can Help:

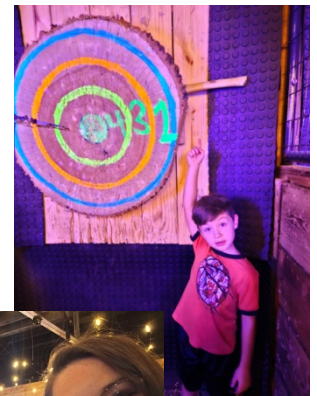
- Sign up to host a trunk and pass out candy.
- Donate candy to share.
- Contribute financially to help cover the cost of pizza, water, and party supplies.

This is a fantastic opportunity to connect with our neighbors and extend a warm welcome to families who may become part of the TUMC family in the future. Thank you for helping us make this outreach event a blessing to our community!



Submitted by Amanda Bartel

Grannie Frannie was crowned the winner of our crown-decorating contest as we learned about wise King Solomon in First Kings.



Submitted by Amanda Bartel

Lots of fun and learning how movies are made at the Blanket Hill Productions of the Christian movie **Six**.

A yellow starburst graphic with the words "CLEARANCE SALE" in red and white text.

HEAVENLY CRAFTERS CLEARANCE SALE

Submitted by Betsy Bucco

Back by popular demand. The Heavenly Hands Crafters are having a HALF-OFF Clearance Sale of crafts from last year. The sale will be held in the Social Hall on Sunday, October 12 and Sunday, October 19 following the morning worship service until 11AM. Come on down and don't miss out on some great bargains! The money from this sale will be used to off-set expenses for the Holiday Country Store. Thank You.



Holiday Country Store – Save the Date!



Submitted by Betsy Bucco

Fall is in the air. The leaves will soon be putting on their beautiful show.

The Heavenly Hands Crafters are busy getting ready for Trinity's annual HOLIDAY COUNTRY STORE. This year the event will be held on **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1**, from **10AM-2PM** in the **Church Social Hall**.

We have been crafting since February, creating many beautiful and unique holiday items. Do some early holiday shopping for everyone on your list and (maybe a little something for yourself too)!

The Bake Shop will offer many delicious baked goods. Stop by the Country Kitchen for a satisfying lunch (either eat-in or take-out). Be sure to have dessert. Buff will be selling quarts of homemade soups-great to warm you up on a chilly day. Invite family and friends to join us on this day of fellowship and fun.

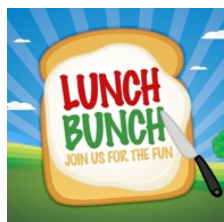
There is a church-wide event and we appreciate your support. We can use donations of grocery items for preparing the food. Calling all bakers for the donation of baked goods. There will be sign-up sheets in the Narthex to participate in helping in this event. As always, monetary gifts to help defray expenses are welcome.

The monies received on this day will go into the **General Fund** to support the mission of our Church in this community except for a portion reserved for a start-up fund for next year.

The Heavenly Crafters are dedicated to helping the growth and mission of sharing the warm heart of Christ. We work lovingly to support Trinity and its mission.

Think about joining us next February for a morning of first of all Christian Fellowship as we busy are hands with new crafts. **Questions? See Betsy Bucco 724-224-1062**

Thank you for your prayers, donations and helping hands. **God Bless You!**



YOU ARE INVITED The third Wednesday of each month everyone attending a charge church is invited to join the "Lunch Bunch". This month's "Lunch

Bunch" will meet on **October 15th @ Chili's**. Pittsburgh Mills starting at **11:30**. See you there. No RSVP necessary.



**Tarentum Holiday Parade
November 22 1:00**

If you would like to help Trinity create a float for the parade, please contact Amanda Bartel or Chris Steele. We need help building the float and pulling the trailer.



Caring for Our Shut-Ins, Students, and Service Members

Submitted by Fran Alter and Nancy Fannie

One of the great blessings of our church is the care and love we continue to share with those who cannot be with us regularly. Our visitation team faithfully visits nursing homes and homebound members, sending weekly cards and letters, making phone calls, and stopping in for visits. These simple gestures mean so much—many still speak warmly of visits from Pastor Zack, and our team, remembering their days of active involvement at Trinity and the joy they found here.

We would love to expand this ministry of care. If you have a shut-in, college student, or service member in your family, please call the office or Fran with their name, address, and birthday. We hope to begin sending them the church newsletter, *Our Daily Bread* devotional, birthday cards, monthly “Thinking of You” notes, and holiday greetings—reminders that their Trinity family still loves and prays for them.

Currently, about 17–18 letters and cards go out weekly, along with visits once or twice a month in local nursing homes. Many of our members are deeply touched by these contacts, and we’d love to see even more people included. Pastor Zack has even requested photos so he can better connect faces with names—something our friends in care facilities were delighted to help with!

You can be part of this ministry, too. A card, a letter, a call, or even a short visit makes a difference. Contact Fran Alter @ 724-882-5580 or Nancy Fannie @ 412-496-8443 for more information.

“They still talk about Trinity all the time—how involved they once were and how much those memories mean to them. Let’s keep reminding them they are still part of our church family.”

Mission Ministry

Submitted by Betsy Bucco



Item of the Month: In October we will be collecting **CANNED SOUP** for the AVAC Food Bank.

We have received a letter from AVAC thanking us for being so generous and faithful in our donations.

A big thank you to Linda Hughsan who delivers our donation each month. A thank you from the Mission Ministry for your generosity in supporting this outreach.

The Mission Ministry will be meeting Thursday, **October 23, 2025, at 6:30PM.**

We will be finalizing our plans for the holiday season outreaches. Also, we will be looking ahead to 2026 to make sure the mission of the Trinity UMC is moving forward in serving others.

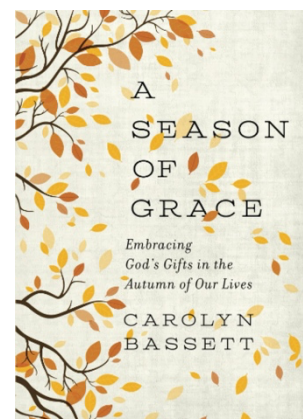
Everyone is welcome!

RECOMMENDED READING

A Season of Grace by Carolyn Bassett

Submitted by Amanda Bartel

"Every season of our lives is filled with God's grace, but the aging process can cause believers to lose sight of the gifts that God offers each day. A Season of Grace, a collection of seventy-five reflections, can help older adults remember all that God is doing in their lives....This is an encouraging and uplifting book that will bring joy to the hearts of its readers, giving them hope that God is always with them, even in difficult times." Amazon.com



You Can Help Create a Beautiful Worship Environment

Submitted by Karen Fazio

The Worship Committee wants to welcome all to our church family tradition of Hanging of the Greens. It is a great start for kicking off the holiday season.

Please join us after the church service on November 23rd as we decorate the church for the Advent and Christmas season.

Everyone can help us beautify the church for the Holy Holiday Season!

Whether you are 2 or 92 there are ways you can help. You are needed to help decorate the Sanctuary, Social Hall, Parlor, Choir Room, Hallways, Bulletin Boards, and outside the building. Ask or call Karen Fazio 412-266-5626 with any questions. Hope to see you all there.



The Worship Committee welcomes everyone to decorate the altar for Christmas with the purchase of beautiful red poinsettias. Poinsettias will be arranged on the altar for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

You can purchase plants individually, as a dedication in honor of someone, or in memory of a loved one. In lieu of a poinsettia you may donate to the Noah Fund ("rainy day" monies to meet unexpected and emergency needs). Order forms will be available beginning November 30. Please include cash or checks made out to TUMC with your order form.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2 Janet Aftanas | 12 Kristen Cornuet | 23 Timothy Collins |
| 2 Harry Crytzer | 13 Gayla Wilson | 24 Steven Witucki |
| 2 Theresa Crytzer | 15 Lisa Rubendall | 25 Diana Lucas |
| 4 Dianne Baker | 17 Mary Ann Krysik | 26 Betty Reesman |
| 9 Bridget Snebold | 17 Ryan Snebold | 28 Alayna Collins |
| 11 Chris Steele | 20 Cody Collins | |

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Michele Marshall | 6 Shelley Eberle | 15 Erica Collins |
| 1 Kelly Robinson, | 8 Billie Godlewski | 16 Sandra Wilhelm |
| 3 Devan Chapman | 8 Kristin Wildi | 29 Grabielle Collins |
| 3 Christine Spencer | 8 Jan Witucki | 29 Connor Dlubak |
| 4 Sarah Connolly | 10 Sharon Rankin | |
| 5 Robin Robinson | 11 George Faltot | |

If we missed your birthday, please contact Colleen Rudolph at trinitybrackenridge@gmail.com

In Honor and Memory

The following donations to the general fund have been received:


In Memory of Arlene Hill by Homer & Joan Logan, by Colleen Rudolph, by Howard & Beth Sarver, and by Chris & Charlie Steele




Deadline for the December/January issue of The Christian Flame is November 17. Please give all articles to Chris Steele or send to her email at clsteele@gmail.com.

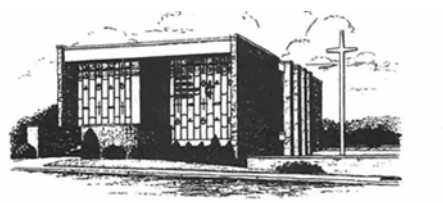
Editor: Chris Steele
Proofreaders: Betty Ruediger, Colleen Rudolph
Assemblers: Betty & Bill Ruediger, Colleen Rudolph, Beth Sarver, Charlie Steele

October 2025

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Pastor Appreciation Month | | | | | | |
| 5 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School | 6 6PM Martial Arts | 7 9AM Heavenly Crafters | 8 6:30 SPR Meeting 8PM A.A./AI-Anon | 9 6:30 PM Finance Meeting 7:30 PM Admin. Council Meeting | 10 10AM AVAC Board 6 PM Girl Scout Troop Meeting | 11 10AM NA |
| 12 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School Heavenly Crafters Clearance Sale | 13 6PM Martial Arts 6PM Education Meeting | 14 9AM Heavenly Crafters | 15 11:30 AM Lunch Bunch-Chili's 8PM A.A./AI-Anon | 16 6PM Brownie & Daisy | 17 10AM AVAC Board 6PM Cadet Troop Meeting | 18 10AM NA |
| 19 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School Heavenly Crafters Clearance Sale | 20 6PM Martial Arts 6:30PM Trustees | 21 9AM Heavenly Crafters | 22 8PM A.A./AI-Anon | 23 6:30PM Mission Ministry | 24 | 25 10AM NA 2-4PM Trunk or Treat |
| 26 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School | 27 6PM Martial Arts | 28 9AM Heavenly Crafters | 29 8PM A.A./AI-Anon | 30 | 31 5:00 pm Country Store Setup 6PM Cadets  | |

November 2025

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | | | | | | 1 10AM Country Store 10AM NA |
| 2 ALL SAINTS DAY 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School | 3 6 PM Martial Arts | 4 9AM Heavenly Crafters | 5 2PM Promise House Meal Prep 8PM A.A./Al-Anon | 6 6PM Brownies & Daisies | 7 | 8 10AM NA |
| 9 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School | 10 6 PM Martial Arts 6PM Education Meeting | 11 | 12 6:30 PM SPR Meeting 8PM A.A./Al-Anon | 13 6:30PM Finance Meeting 7:30PM Admin. Council Meeting | 14 10AM AVAC Board 6PM Cadet Meeting | 15 10AM NA |
| 16 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School | 17 6 PM Martial Arts 6:30 PM Trustees Meeting | 18 | 19 8PM A.A./Al-Anon | 20 6PM Brownies & Daisies | 21 | 22 10AM NA 1:00PM Holiday Parade |
| 23 & 30 8:30AM Hospitality 9AM Worship 10AM Sunday School 30 10AM Hanging of the Greens | 24 6 PM Martial Arts | 25 | 26 8PM A.A./Al-Anon | 27  | 28 6PM Cadet Meeting | 29 10AM NA |



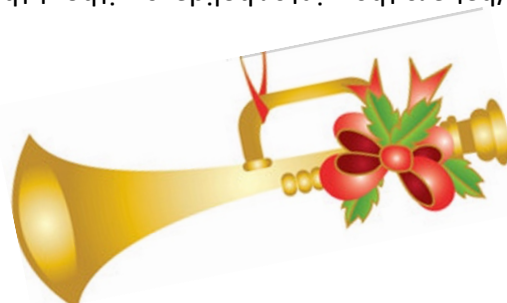
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847 Tenth Ave, Brackenridge PA 15014

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Mail to:

Looking Ahead to Christmas Eve



What are the winter holidays without the glorious sounds of Christmas music!

Mark your calendars for **December 24th at 7:00 PM** to hear the wonderful music of the **Trinity Brass**. They will present a Christmas Concert for us before the **8:00 PM Christmas Eve service**.

What a glorious way to welcome the birthday of our King.

Donations to cover the cost of the concert are welcome. Write Christmas Eve Concert on your envelope.