

Trinity Trumpet November/December 2025

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Trinity United Church of Christ

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Whisper of Seasons

The amber leaves drift, a final waltz,
Their golden glow fades, nature halts.
The air grows crisp, a quiet sigh,
As autumn bows to winter's sky.
The trees stand bare, their stories told,
Their branches etched in frost and cold.
A hush descends, the earth takes pause,
Awaiting snow with silent cause.
The sun retreats, its warmth subdued,
The moon ascends in solitude.
Yet in this shift, a beauty gleams,
A bridge between the seasons' dreams.
So let us cherish this fleeting grace,
The tender change, the soft embrace.
For in the stillness, life renews,
As fall departs, and winter ensues.

A message from your Pastor

Gracious God we are blessed by an abundant harvest. Our store houses are full of summer memories.

The falling leaves come down around us with a renewing Spirit. Assuring us that as a season of our life ends you are there to greet us as the next season begins.

Help us to share a harvest of your fruitful abundance with our neighbors. To show a world the Love of Jesus Christ. Assure us that we will be prepared for a winter cold, surrounded by the Grace of Jesus Christ, at peace in his forgiveness. Amen

“The Church Universal”

At least once a month someone comes to me and wonders why we believe in the “Catholic Church”. Many of the creeds we share today use some old language that we should consider for a moment. Each time I get the question I stop, and try my best to explain to the perplexed person that when the early creeds were written there was no “Church”. Nothing organized as it is today, and certainly nothing as diverse as what we have now. Those early Church Leaders rallied behind Gods desire for us all to be in “Covenant” with each other. They built the creeds we share from the Gospels and tried to write a *belief* that as Jesus Prayed “we would all be one” that the Church Universal would be the body of Christ here on Earth. For them, the word “Universal” was catholic. This was long before a Pope or Vatican existed as it does today. To show that this question, and the confusion around it, is found in many places my Church History class devotes an entire chapter on it.

The following is a quote from my Church History Textbook trying to make sense of this issue for those seeking knowledge.

“The word *catholic* means “universal” but is also means “according to the whole”. To separate itself from various heretical

groups the ancient church began calling itself “Catholic”. This title underscored both its universality and the inclusiveness of the witness on which it stood. It was the church according to the total witness of all the apostles and all the evangelists.”

The Story of Christianity, Volume 1, Gonzalez

A message from your Consistory President

It is hard to believe that 2025 is coming to an end already, but then again the old saying that "time flies when you are having fun!" I also feel extremely thankful and blessed to be a member of the Trinity Family! A Church that does God's work in church, community and family. We are blessed with many disciples and leaders who work together sharing their time talents and treasury. If you have a talent along with the passion to share it with others don't hide it. Let your light shine and team up with one of our groups or even start another one. I am also thankful to have been able to work directly with Pastor Dave more in 2025 and walk with him on our faith journey. I look forward every week to his heartfelt messages from his biblical perspective. I also notice his ability to connect with all age groups; the interest and excitement is growing! God is with us!

Alleluia - Tom Croner



Consistory Corner
Trinity United Church of Christ
September 8, 2025

Attendance

X Lori Gindlesperger (2027) Deacon A Jean Hart (2026) Deacon
X Jeanne Hillegas (2027) Deacon X Bill Landis (2026) Deacon
X Allen Strasser (2027) Deacon A Amanda Custer (2025) Deacon
X Allison Zimmerman (2027) Elder A Tom Croner (2025) Deacon
X Pam Bush (2026) Deacon X Sheron Engleka (2025) Elder
X Jim Darr (2026) Elder A Julie Petro (2025) Deacon
X Pastor Dave Creamer
X Renee Gindlesperger – Financial Sec.

Vice President Bill Landis called the regular meeting of Trinity United Church of Christ Consistory to order at 7:00pm. Pastor Dave offered prayer.

Minutes for August meeting

Minutes for the August 11, 2025 meeting were sent to the consistory members electronically before the September meeting. A motion was made by Jeanne Hillegas, seconded by Lori Gindlesperger to approve the August 11th minutes. **Motion approved.**

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was given to the consistory prior to the meeting for review. A motion was made by Lori Gindlesperger, seconded by Allison Zimmerman to accept treasurer's report and file for audit. **Motion approved.** Jim Darr announced that there will be a budget committee meeting on Tuesday, October 7th at 6:30pm. All deacons are to attend this meeting. A motion was made by Pam Bush, seconded by Jeanne Hillegas to have the

month of October for Operation Christmas child donations. **Motion approved.** A motion was made by Lori Gindlesperger, seconded by Allison Zimmerman to have the Congregational meeting on Sunday, December 7th. **Motion approved.** A motion was made by Allen Strasser, seconded by Pam Bush to have each Sunday in October to be Jingle Sunday and the monies received will go toward the shipping of the Christmas Child boxes. **Motion approved.**

Student Minister's report

Pastor Dave reported that he did all regular services this past month along with home visits. He reported that there will be a meeting on September 28th concerning voting on the merger of associations into the Pittsburgh association. Our church can have 3 delegates to this meeting. More information will be given to the consistory members concerning this meeting before the September 28th meeting. Steve Dining will be preaching on September 28th.

Standing Committee Reports

- a. **Fellowship and Funeral** – Lori Gindlesperger reported that our church will have pumpkin rolls and pumpkin gobs for sale at the Fall Foliage Day at Humble House on October 11th.
- b. **Music** - Jeanne Hillegas reported that the bells will be playing on Heritage Sun day, October 5th along with the Lutheran Bell Choir. A Christmas Bell Choir program is being planned with the Brethren, Lutheran and TUCC's Bell Choirs. A motion was made by Pam Bush, seconded by Jim Darr for our church to host the Community Christmas Bell Choir Concert. **Motion approved.**

Special Committee Reports

- a. Christmas Decorations – Jim Darr reported that there will not be a big Christmas tree this year but 3 or 4 smaller trees.
- b. Paraments – Allison Zimmerman reported that she was asked to talk to the children (confirmands) about the paraments that are on the alter and pulpits in front of the church.
- c. Anniversary - It was reported that the next meeting of the Semi quinentennial meeting is on Tuesday, September 16th at 7:00pm.

Coordinators' Reports

- a. Member update – It was reported that a new member was received – Mary Pirtle

New Business

- a. State Elevator Inspection - It was reported that we will be having a State Elevator inspection.
- b. Raised garden project – Bill Landis reported that he met with Amanda Custer and Jean Hart concerning the raised garden project, getting together the cost of lumber etc. to have the information needed to apply for a grant.
- c. Corn picking – It was reported that the corn is ready for the youth to pick and give to the food pantry.

A motion was made by Pam Bush, seconded by Jeanne Hillegas to adjourn the meeting. **Motion approved.**

The next meeting of the consistory will be **Monday, October 13, 2025 at 7:00pm.**

Respectfully submitted, Sheron Engleka, Secretary

**Trinity United Church of Christ
October 13, 2025**

Attendance

A Lori Gindlesperger (2027) Deacon X Jean Hart (2026) Deacon
X Jeanne Hillegas (2027) Deacon X Bill Landis (2026) Deacon
X Allen Strasser (2027) Deacon X Amanda Custer (2025) Deacon
A Allison Zimmerman (2027) Elder A Tom Croner (2025) Deacon
X Pam Bush (2026) Deacon X Sheron Engleka (2025) Elder
X Jim Darr (2026) Elder A Julie Petro (2025) Deacon
X Pastor Dave Creamer
X Renee Gindlesperger Financial Sec.

Vice President Bill Landis called the regular meeting of Trinity United Church of Christ Consistory to order at 7:00pm. Pastor Dave offered prayer.

Minutes for September meeting

Minutes for the September 8, 2025 meeting were sent to the consistory members electronically before the October meeting. A motion was made by Jeanne Hillegas, seconded by Jean Hart to approve the September 8th minutes. **Motion approved.**

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was given to the consistory prior to the meeting for review. A motion was made by Jeanne Hillegas, seconded by Jean Hart to accept treasurer's report and file for audit. The consistory was given the proposed budget for 2026 from the budget committee. The increase in salaries was recommended by the Pastor and Personnel Committee and the increase in cost was given to reflect actual costs. A motion was made by Allen Strasser, seconded by Jean Hart to approve the proposed budget and present to the congregation. **Motion approved.**

Student Minister's report

Pastor Dave reported that he did 3 home visits, used one vacation Sunday, had one funeral and attended Association meeting. He

reported that the Somerset County association did not approve the consolidation with the Pittsburgh Association. He reported that his last classes for this period were last Saturday and this Friday. He reported that he must do the Hospital Chaplaincy program training. UPMC has given him a Scholarship for these classes. It is a 6 month program, three hours every other week. He reported that the Hay family will do membership through baptism.

Standing Committee Reports

- A. **Fellowship and Funeral** – Jean Hart reported that they had one funeral dinner (Ruth Elaine Whitacre). She reported that a request had been received from the girls Volleyball team to provide a meal before the game this Thursday if they win the game tonight. This would be before the semi- final match. A motion was made by Sheron Engleka, seconded by Amanda Custer to provide a meal for the Volleyball team before their game this Thursday. **Motion approved.** A discussion followed concerning the cost of funeral dinners to members of our congregation. A motion was made by Pam Bush, seconded by Allen Strasser that the church will pay for the funeral dinners for members of our church but ask the family for a donation. **Motion approved.**
- B. **Hugs and Kisses** Amanda Custer reported that the following activities have been planned. October 19th – Ham and Bean soup sale, October 26th Paint the pavilion at Unity, November 23rd – Sky Zone Trampoline, December 14th – Children’s Christmas Program Cora Wright and Colton Custer are organizing this program, January planning a pizza and game night.
- C. **Music** – Jeanne Hillegas reported that there will not be a Community Bell Choir Concert this year. It does not

work for the Berlin Brethren Bell Choir due to a prior commitment. The Tucc ringers will play on November 2nd.

- D. Property – Jim Darr reported that the televisions downstairs are not working. New wiring is needed from the sound board and televisions. He also reported that they have been cleaning out the closets in the choir room.

Special Committee Reports

- A. Finance – Renee Gindlesperger reported about tithing online. A program is available for churches to use called Tithely. A motion was made by Jeanne Hillegas, seconded by Pam Bush to use the online program Tithely. **Motion approved.**
- B. Trinity Ladies – Jean Hart reported that April Logue talked to the ladies about Santa’s Workshop. Volunteers are needed to help with this project. They meet every Wednesday after Thanksgiving at the playground from 9 – 11 am.
- C. Christmas Decorations – Jim Darr reported that there would not be a big tree this year. There will be three smaller trees.
- D. Nominations – It was reported that the following have agreed to go on the 2026-2028 consistory. This slate will be presented to the congregation at the congregational meeting. December 7th. Elder: Sue Coughenour, Deacons: Carrie Croner, Shawn Hart, Amy Saylor.
- E. Anniversary - Jean Hart reported that the committee will be meeting more often. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 18th.
- F. Pictorial – Sheron Engleka reported that the pictorial has been sent to the printer. We currently have 93

pictorials ordered by the congregation. The committee needs to know how many the church wants to order to have extra on hand. A discussion followed and it was decided to order 125 pictorials.

Coordinators' Reports

- A. Living Waters – Jean Hart reported that the last Saturday in October is schedule as clean- up day at Living Waters starting at 8:00am or whenever you can come and help. Many volunteers for this project are needed.

Old Business

Pam Bush reported that the Walton Suder office in Berlin is closing. We will work with their Greensburg office. Our Church insurance is with Guide one Insurance through Walton Suder. The state inspection has been completed on the elevator and it has passed.

A motion was made by Pam Bush, seconded by Jeanne Hillegas to adjourn the meeting. **Motion approved.**

The next meeting of the consistory will be **Monday, November 10, 2025 at 7:00pm.**

Respectfully submitted, Sheron Engleka, Secretary



June 2025 - July 2025

	CURRENT	MAINT.	BENEVOLENCE
Beg. Balance	\$197,118.76	\$37,632.65	\$1,125.00

Receipts	\$23,844.20	\$2,692.00	\$2,928.00
Distributions	\$16,075.64	\$4,649.32	\$3,953.00
Ending			
Balance	\$204,887.32	\$35,675.33	\$100.00

Benevolence Distributions: Our Churches Wider Mission - \$1,875.14; Berlin Food Pantry (Individual Donations) – \$605; Food Pantry (Benevolence Budget) - \$549.61; Trintiy Outreach - \$808.25; Disaster Relief - \$25.00; Global Ministries - Child Sponsorship - \$90.00

Memorials (thru 10/18/25)

A gift was given to the Music Fund in memory of Robert Coughenour.

Gifts were given to the Memorial Fund in memory of Ruth Elaine Whitacre.

--Jim Darr, Treasurer



Those Remembered in prayer:

God's guidance and protection for Armed Forces.

Shut Ins:

Barb Berkley, Mary Jane Harding, Cynthia Kelly, Debbi Luteri, Lillian Potter, Lois Saylor

Healing Concerns:

Mark Amyot, Donnie Baxter, Jim Benoit, Brad Bowers, Paige Boyer, Chris Brant, Rhonda Brown, Ray Coleman, Susan Constantino, Tammy Coughenour, Eric Custer, Tracy Dickey, Wilma Durst, Jeff Gavel, Nancy Gindlesperger, Marlene Gotchen, Dennis Griffith, Karen Griffith, Andrea (Shaulis) Harris, Joe Harris, Michael Harris,

Joy Hay (Dwayne), Kris Hay, Larry Hay, Marilyn Heiple,
Gary Hillegas, Barry Landis, Brenda Leister, Richard Lilliston,
Jim Little, Blair and Phylis Lyons, Judy McCullen, Larry McCullen,
Joyce Miller, Robert "Lee" Miller, Carl (Edison) Paul,
Kathy Picking, Easton Pritts, Brian Robb,
James Robb, Brett Sarver, Karol Saylor, Tammie Saylor,
Nancy Schrock, Curt Shaulis, Missy Shaulis, Phyllis Stoy,
Dawn Edmiston-Strasser, Larry Tinkey, Patsy and Dave Titus,
Barbara & Peter Usher Robin Walker,
Nancy Weighley, Echo Kincaid Yoder, Gerald Zorn

All Saints' Day

As the air turns crisp and the leaves begin to fall, our church calendar points us toward a day of profound remembrance and celebration: All Saints' Day on November 1st. This is a special time when we pause to honor and give thanks for all the saints—both those who have been formally recognized by the church and those known only to God.

The Bible reminds us that we are "surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12:1). All Saints' Day is our moment to reflect on this glorious company of believers who have gone before us, who ran the race of faith and now rest in the Lord's eternal presence. This includes the great biblical figures and martyrs, but it also includes the faithful members of our own congregation who have passed away.

For us, this day is not just about recalling history or listing names. It's about remembering that the church is one body, with a spiritual bond connecting the living and the deceased. It is a time for us to celebrate the lives of those who inspired us and to find encouragement in their perseverance.

Beyond looking to the past, All Saints' Day also serves as a call to each of us. It is a reminder that the path of holiness is open to all who follow Christ faithfully. The saints were ordinary people who lived extraordinary lives of faith and dedication to God. Their stories challenge and encourage us to live our own lives for the glory of God, right here and now.

All Saints Celebration – November 2nd

This is the feast of All Saints. We celebrate the Saints that have gone before us this past year. As is our tradition, the names of those remembered will be read, individually as the tower bell tolls, family members are invited to the chancel to light a candle in memory of their loved one. Following worship, the family is invited to take the votive candle and the white flower from the table to continue to remember and give thanks for a life well lived.

Honoring and Remembering:

**Helen Diest
Roy Bucher
Walter Miller
Lois Krause
Mary Forespring
Ed Tarker
Barbara Zerfoss
Abby Bush
Ruth Elaine Whitacre**



Our Annual Salute to Veterans November 9, 2025 During Sunday Service

Please take this opportunity to join us in honoring our Veterans as well as those currently serving.



Congregational Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held December 7th following worship. Enclosed in your newsletter you will find our proposed budget for 2026. Additionally, we will be honoring our outgoing Consistory members: Deacon Tom Croner, Deacon Amanda Custer, Elder Sheron Engleka and Deacon Julie Petro. We will also be voting on the 2026 nominations: Elder Sue Coughenour, Deacon Carrie Croner, Deacon Shawn Hart and Deacon Amy Saylor.

Adopt A Family

We will begin collecting money again this year for families in need through November. If you would like to donate towards our Adopt-A-Family please make note of it on your collection envelope. Every year there are individuals to help shop, wrap, and support this cause; it truly means so much to each of the recipients. Thank you. If you have any questions or would like to assist, please contact Julie Petro at 814-442-5124

Ministry Opportunity

There is a unique ministry opportunity for anyone who likes to crochet or knit, or someone who can cut plastic bags. Sleeping mats made from plastic bag "yarn" (known as plan) are made and donated to the Pittsburgh Distribution Center for the Homeless. To learn more about this ministry, please contact Sue Coughenour at 814-233-5413.

Adult Sunday School

The Adult Sunday School class has been doing a deep dive into the book of Daniel. We are learning about God's faithfulness to the Israelites even when they are being punished in captivity for their unfaithfulness to God. We have seen God give a heathen king a vision of the future, then gives Daniel the ability to interpret that vision. We've seen how parts of that vision have been fulfilled in an astoundingly detailed way. And we have seen how God can move to make a mighty king made lower than low and then raise him back up in a heartbeat. All this and we are only in Chapter 4! Daniel certainly isn't a boring book! We always welcome newcomers to class and would love to have you join us in the Fellowship Hall, following the morning worship service. In the

future we will be doing more in-depth studies of books of the Bible. If you have a one you'd really like to understand better, let Sue Coughenour know (814-233-5413), and we can dive in together!

Trinity Ladies

Trinity Ladies meet on the first Monday of each month at Cup of Soul at 11:30.

Hugs & Kisses

As usual our amazing group, Hugs & Kisses, have a lot planned for November and December.

November 23rd - Trip to Sky Zone Trampoline Park in Monroeville.

H&K will pay for youth attending. We will carpool after Sunday School and eat somewhere in Somerset before heading to Monroeville. Our group time starts at 2:00 PM. Any youth will need a waiver signed by a parent if attending RSVP to Alissa Wright by November 16th.

December 14th - Youth Christmas Play

Colton and Cora will be in charge, Tentative practices during Sunday School in December and dress rehearsal practice Saturday, December 13th in the afternoon, time TBD.

Pictorial Update

The church pictorial has been sent to the printer! I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the other members of the Pictorial Committee—Sheron Engleka, Jean Hart, Sue Miller, Julie Petro, and Amy Saylor—for their invaluable assistance in coordinating the project, family photo schedule and sessions.

A special thank-you to Amy Saylor, whose creativity and countless hours of work have resulted in a truly beautiful pictorial. I also wish to recognize Pam Bush, Jean Ann Darr, and Renee Gindlesperger for their help with the directory portion of the project.

This pictorial is a wonderful reflection of our church family. Thank you to everyone who contributed photos or participated in any way to make this meaningful keepsake possible.

Lori Gindlesperger

Grant For Community Garden

Hugs & Kisses and the church are applying for a grant from the Penn West Conference to build two raised bed gardens for the Food Pantry. If we are awarded the grant, we will build the boxes in early spring and plant in mid to late May next year. Our youth will help build, plant and maintain the boxes with the guidance of our experienced church members.

This will be an ongoing project; therefore, we will need your support going forward. Our hope is you will support this project with your contributions of time and funds.

Church World Services Disaster Kits.

Church World Services (CSW) assembles disaster kits to provide essential items to those in need, especially during natural disasters, violence, or grinding poverty. These kits aim to restore Dignity and meet a critical yet often overlooked need. This is an ongoing mission as disasters have no expiration date.

Berlin Historical Society Colonial Christmas at the Humble House

The Historical Society is excited to present their inaugural Colonial Christmas even at the beloved “Humble House” on Sunday, December 14th, from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. Join us for an afternoon filled with festive cheer as we serve delicious cookies, cider, and hot chocolate to warm the heart. Revel in the joy of Christmas music and partake in a variety of engaging activities designed to transport you to a bygone era and ignite holiday spirit. We warmly invite you to celebrate this special occasion with us and create cherished memories. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Thank you Sue Coughenour for sharing.
Here is one of many of what I call God Moments:**

There are five years between my daughter and son, this wasn't by design. Having conceived my daughter without any problem, I was really distressed when I was having a difficult time conceiving a second time. Back then there wasn't all the science to help you to conceive; month after month, year after year I prayed that I could have the second child I wanted. I prayed long pleading prayers to God, asking for this gift to be given to me. One day I decided to take an afternoon nap. I was deep into a vivid dream where I was at the beach, when suddenly I was woken up by a voice. That voice said, "You will have a son." I woke up confused as there was no one in the room with me. This voice had awoken me from a deep dream, I didn't know if I had imagined it or not. One month later I found out I was pregnant! And as you may guess, it was a son! Praise be to God!

This is the off year for Bethlehem Experience; however, we are excited to be able to enjoy the **Pius Spring Women's Club Bazaar & Home Tour!**

Pius Spring Woman's Club
presents
**Home for
Christmas**
Bazaar & Home Tour
November 15 & 16, 2025

Pius Spring Women's Club
"Home for Christmas" Bazaar & Home Tour
November 15 & 16, 2025

Home Tour Tickets \$10.00
Tickets can be purchased from any Club member or at the door

Tour begins at the Community Building
700 North Street, Berlin, PA. Transportation provided

Bazaar located in the Community Building

Saturday:
Doors open at 9:00 a.m.
Tours from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Last tour begins at 4:00 p.m.)
Lunch is available 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sunday:
Doors open at 12:00 p.m.
Tours from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Last tour begins at 3:00 p.m.)
Lunch is available 12:00 p.m. to ?

Kindness

Thank you Colleen Glotfelty for sharing



I was walking to the register of the dollar store today, arms full of paper towels and cleaning products , when I noticed a woman at the register ahead of me. She couldn't have been taller than five feet, maybe 83 or 84, wearing her Sunday best — a light blue suit, matching hat, and a string of pearls that caught the fluorescent light. She was beautiful in that dignified, old-fashioned way that makes you want to stand a little straighter just being near her. But her hands were trembling.

She was trying, over and over, to punch her PIN into the card reader. It beeped, blinked red, and refused her again.

Behind me, a man sighed loud enough for everyone in the checkout line to hear. “Come ON,” he muttered, shifting from one foot to the other like she was stealing time he could never get back.

The cashier, bless her heart, tried to stay patient, but you could see the tension in her shoulders too — that mixture of sympathy and schedule that retail workers live under.

So I stepped forward. “Let's try one more time, sweetheart,” I said softly. “Take a deep breath. Sometimes those machines have worse manners than people.”

That earned me a little smile.

She nodded, tapped her card again, and this time it worked.

When she looked up, her eyes crinkled with relief. “Well, isn't that something,” she said, almost to herself. “Even my card's getting old and forgetful.”

We laughed together, but the man behind me didn't. He just grabbed his items, muttered something under his breath, and stalked out the door.

The cashier handed over the woman's receipt, and she started gathering her bags — four of them heavy with canned goods, laundry detergent, and a few treats that made me think she still enjoyed the little things: a box of sugar wafers, a new dish towel printed with sunflowers.

She made her way to the exit, only to stop at the row of shopping carts. Her cart had one of those long metal poles sticking up from it — the kind that stops you from taking it out of the store.

She tried to angle it just right to get it through the door, and I could see the confusion and embarrassment starting to flicker across her face.

I put my items down & stepped forward. "Here, let me help you," I said.

"Oh no," she insisted quickly, her voice tight but polite. "That's alright, dear. I'll manage."

I shook my head. "You've already done your managing for the day. Please, let me give you a hand."

She hesitated, then looked out toward the parking lot, where the sunlight was fading behind a row of cars. Then she looked back at her bags and sighed.

"Well," she said quietly, "I don't want to trouble you. You might not even be parked near me."

"Then I'll just walk a little further," I said, smiling. "It'll do me good." That's when she finally let me help.

As we walked out together, she introduced herself. "I'm Dixie," she said. "I'm 83. I stopped in after church and the grocery store.

These errands wear my old body out sometimes."

She chuckled, but it was the kind of laugh that hides a little exhaustion underneath.

Her car was parked near the back of the lot, one of those older Buicks that still had the "Jesus Loves You" bumper sticker faded from years of sunshine. As we loaded her bags into the trunk, she kept apologizing.

"I used to be faster," she said. "Used to carry my groceries, my grandbabies, my whole world. Now look at me — can't even remember my own PIN number."

I wanted to tell her she didn't need to be fast, that she'd already done her running, her serving, her raising. But I just smiled and said, "Well, you're doing just fine, Dixie."

When I closed her trunk and turned to wish her a good day, she reached into her purse and asked, "How much do I owe you?" I laughed, thinking she was joking. "You don't owe me a thing." But her expression didn't change. Her hand trembled as she pulled out her wallet. "No, no. You helped me carry those heavy bags. I must pay you."

That's when my heart cracked a little.

I gently put my hand on hers. "Dixie, please don't. You don't owe me anything — not for this, not for kindness."

Her eyes softened, but the confusion remained. "It's just... people don't do that anymore," she whispered.

And she's right.

When did kindness become a transaction? When did we start living like generosity requires a receipt?

As I drove home, I couldn't stop thinking about her — about how instinctively she'd reached for her wallet instead of her gratitude, because somewhere along the way, we taught her that help must come with a price.

Dixie isn't just one woman at a dollar store. She's all the elderly people trying to hold onto their independence in a world that's racing past them. She's the tired man at the pharmacy trying to hear the pharmacist through his hearing aid. She's the woman in the grocery aisle reading labels too small to see, while someone behind her sighs impatiently.

And if we're honest, we're failing them.

We're failing our elderly — the people who built our towns, raised our parents, kept our neighborhoods kind. We're failing our young ones too, who are growing up thinking eye contact is a threat and patience is optional.

We have to do better.

We have to choose kindness, not just when it's convenient or photogenic, but when it's slow and awkward and unprofitable. We have to hold doors. Smile first. Speak gently. Offer our time like it's worth more than our money — because it is.

We have to remind people like Dixie that kindness still exists. That not everyone wants something in return. That she can walk through this world believing she's safe and valued, not a burden. We need to spark again. Not the kind of spark that burns fast and fades, but the steady kind — the one that warms hearts and lights others to do the same.

So, here's my challenge to you:

Tomorrow, be deliberate. Go out of your way for someone. Say "you're welcome" and mean it. Ask a name, remember it. If you see someone like Dixie, don't wait to be asked — step forward. Offer. Show them we remember what community feels like.

Because if we don't start sparking more light into this world, the shadows will keep growing — and one day, we'll all be the ones standing at the checkout, trying to remember our PIN, hoping someone behind us still remembers how to care.

Can't we do better?

For Dixie — and for all our elderly.

Worship Assistants

November 2

Sound: Lori Gindlesperger, Jim Darr

Organ: Ann Slifco

Flowers: Chris King

Ushers: Sheron Engleka, Alissa Wright

Acolyte: Cora and Lucy Wright

November 9

Sound: Pam Bush & Jean Ann Darr

Organ: Nancy Bittner

Flowers: Craig & Amy Saylor

Special Flowers: Anonymous

Special Flowers & Bulletin – Larry & Judy McCullen

Ushers: Bob Brown & John Wisler

Acolyte: Mason & Maelyn Fochtman

November 16

Sound: Cohen Clark, Pam Bush
Organ: Amy Clark
Flowers: Barry Landis
Bulletin: Craig & Amy Stiffler
Ushers: Jean Ann & Jim Darr
Acolyte: Liz Hart, Rylee Beckwith

November 23

Sound: Jim Darr, Bill Landis
Organ: Amanda Custer
Flowers: Michele Romesberg
Ushers: Deb Boyer, Jean Hart
Acolyte: Avery and Isla Hillegas

November 30

Sound: Jim Darr, Bill Landis
Organ: Jean Ann Darr
Flowers: Nancy Bittner
Special Flowers: Judy McCullen
Ushers: Ann Slifco, Chris King
Acolyte: Truitt & Callum Ogburn

December 7

Sound: Lori Gindlesperger, Chris King
Organ: Ann Slifco
Flowers: Dave & Missy Miller
Ushers: Leanna Coughenour, Allison Zimmerman
Acolyte: Colton Custer

December 14

Sound: Cohen Clark, Bill Landis
Organ: Nancy Bittner
Flowers: Karol Saylor
Ushers: Amy & Jason Clark
Acolyte: Cohen Clark

December 21

Sound: Colten Custer, Pam Bush

Organ: Amanda Custer
Flowers: Sue Coughenour
Ushers: Bill Landis, Jim Walker
Acolyte: Kaitlyn Miller

December 24

Sound: Tom Croner, Pam Bush
Organ: Amanda Custer
Bulletin: Craig & Amanda Stiffler
Ushers: Lori Gindlesperger, Jeanne Hillegas
Acolyte:

December 28

Sound: Colten Custer, Jim Darr
Organ: Jean Ann Darr
Flowers: Dale Gindlesperger
Ushers: Ken Miller, Leonard Gary
Acolyte: Nathan Spangler

***The Whole Congregation in Ministry and Assisted by
Dave Creamer, Student Pastor***

Church Secretary: Pam Bush & Jean Ann Darr

Financial Secretary: Renee Gindlesperger

Chancel Choir Director Emeritus: Linda Gallick

Handbells: Jeanne Hillegas

Virtual Organist: Rick Kimmel

Consistory Elders:

Sheron Engleka, Secretary, 814-267-4166

Jim Darr, Treasurer, 814-267-5260

Allison Zimmerman, 814-267-4324

Consistory Deacons:

*Pam Bush, Tom Croner (President) 814-442-6740, Amanda
Custer, Lori Gindlesperger, Jean Hart, Jeanne Hillegas,
Bill Landis, Julie Petro, Allen Strasser*

***Church Office Hours – Tuesday through Thursday
9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.***

Church Office Phone: 814-267-3234

Mail: PO Box 86, Berlin, PA 15530

Email: berlinucc@yahoo.com

Website: www.berlinucc.org

Pastoral Care: For those in need of pastoral care please contact, Dave Creamer, Pastor for Trinity at 814-777-2280. If Dave is not available, please contact Pam Bush at 541-990-0832 or Jay Shaffer at 814-483-0398

As this holiday season approaches, challenge yourself to grow, deepen your relationships, and practice gratitude. By embracing acceptance, staying present, and acting in accordance with your values, you can experience Thanksgiving and Christmas that's not only meaningful but also transformative.

Be mindful of all that Trinity United Church of Christ and it's family has to offer, not just during the holidays, but throughout the year.

We are blessed with an enthusiast, caring, nurturing and passionate group of people from top to bottom. Consider the committees with which we are blessed. From weekly 9:00 a.m. Sunday worship services, Sunday School for both adults and children that meet after worship, our Youth Group Hugs & Kisses (Help Us Grow Spiritually, Kids in Sunday School Every Sunday), Christian Education, Trinity Ladies, Confirmation Classes, Social and Community events including our local Food Pantry, and a variety of congregational projects.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”

~Helen Keller~

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity United Church of Christ.

“Happy Holidays”

God Bless the Person Reading This Bulletin