

JANUARY 2023

# THE AFFINITY

Saturday Worship 5:30p  
Sunday Worship 9:30a  
Sunday Livestream on  
[Facebook & YouTube](#)  
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A PUBLICATION OF  
TRINITY UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH  
OF FORT DODGE

A PLACE TO ... BELONG.  
BELIEVE. BECOME.

## New Year, New Look, New Name

By Ryan Rippentrop

Peace and blessings! This month debuts the newest design of Trinity UMC's monthly newsletter. When I began six months ago, I knew I could bring new style and modernization to the current format. The changes made up to this point have been modest.

As a popular outreach tool, our newsletter must make a solid impression to stand out from all the other mail competing for our readers' attention.

Of course, this newsletter belongs to the members of Trinity United Methodist Church. If you have constructive feedback to provide, I welcome it! Only through open, honest dialogue are positive outcomes possible.

I selected *The Affinity* for two main reasons. First, the rhyme with Trinity is fun. Then the definition stood out to me.

Affinity is an attraction to or liking for something, often marked by a community of interest. I feel that describes a church that frequently describes itself as a family while acknowledging a common faith.

*The Affinity* will be the first significant upgrade in our communication plan. I have also started the second phase, which is modernizing the church website. That process has many moving parts, so be patient, please. If you'd like to assist with website content, volunteer today!

Other elements, like Facebook, devotionals and the logo, will be addressed when time allows and new options are studied. For now, enjoy this edition of *The Affinity*, a Trinity United Methodist Church of Fort Dodge publication. Please reach out to me, in the office, with your ideas, comments, and suggestions.



## Thank You from Your Staff

We would all like to thank the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee and many individual members who showered us with gifts this Christmas. Your, simple, thoughtful recognition brought joy to our hearts and brightened the season. Blessings to you all!

Ryan, Laura, Jena, Brady,  
Jared, Katrina, & Roger

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Our church: [trinityumcfd.org](http://trinityumcfd.org)

Iowa Conference: [iaumc.org](http://iaumc.org)

National UMC: [umc.org](http://umc.org)

## New Year's Blessings!

By Laura Stover

Some thoughts for the new year from Deuteronomy 31:8, "But the Lord is the one who is marching before you! He is the one who will be with you! He won't let you down. He won't abandon you. So don't be afraid or scared."

It is easy to get stuck in the past and be held back emotionally by what happened yesterday. Still, the only way to truly welcome a fresh start is to look forward, not back. Take a deep breath, envision the future you want, and take that first step.

Psalm 20:4—"Let God grant what is in your heart and fulfill all your plans." God always wants your future to be bright. His intention is to surround us with abundance and blessing; have faith in that intention as you go forth into the new year. Let's pray God will lead us to do new and great things in Fort Dodge for God's Kingdom.

Both Pastor Jena and I are taking vacation in January. So, Wednesday night JAM, Stop & Go Supper, and Confirmation will resume on Wednesday, January 25, 2023.

I will send reminder texts to keep you up to date.

## Photo Directory Progress

The new church photo directory is progressing. Recently Peggy Barkhaus jumped in to help with the layout and design work. The entire team is glad she is lending her computer skills.

If all goes well with editing, proof reading, and printing, we could see everyone's big smiles in March.

## Children & Youth Ministry Events

"**BOLD**," the National United Methodist Youth Conference, is July 25-28, 2023, in Daytona Beach, Florida! Trinity's youth are excited to attend and will be diligently raising funds and preparing for this event that only happens every four years. The early bird deadline, which is the cheapest, is January 31, 2023.

Trinity's new **High School Bible Study** will meet in the Youth Room at 8:10p on January 4, 11, and 25, not the 18th. You are encouraged to bring a friend anytime!



It's a **JAM Epiphany Party** on Friday, January 6, 2023, after school until 6p. Pastor Jena & I will pick up the kids just like on Wednesdays.

There will be games, snacks, the movie "The Star," and more to celebrate the 12th day of Christmas, or the day the Wisemen brought their gifts to Jesus.

I will send reminder texts to parents. Friends are welcome to attend!

## Bible Reading Plan for 2023

Pick up a copy at church. Ask and one will be mailed to you. We will include on devotional emails, too.

## PRAYER list

Jim & Sheryl Ainslie  
Bill Becker  
Ed & Joanne Becker  
Rachel Bell  
Dr. Paul Brown  
Don & Elaine Cassady  
Clif Ellerbeck  
Ralph Ewing  
Miriam Hoskins  
Terry Lee  
Betty Lind  
Lois Martin  
Rick & Karen Nelson  
Katrina O'Brien  
Phyllis O'Brien  
Bill Oberhelman  
Cliff & Sharon Perkins  
Linda Pingel  
Steve Roe  
Betty Schneider  
James Smith  
Ilene Smith  
Jean Warg, and brother  
Bill Cunningham  
Joann Whittington  
Gary Winkler



Please let Pastor Jena or the office know if you want to be added or removed from this prayer list. We want to respect your privacy but let our prayer warriors know that you desire inclusion.



## Laura's Highlights of 2022!

By Laura Stover

"JOY to the world, the LORD is come..." sung by the JAM kids during the Christmas program on December 14.



Costumed children depict the nativity scene and sing "Joy to the World" during their Christmas Program December 14, 2022.

What a great turnout of families and friends. Everyone did a wonderful job answering the question, "What does Christmas mean to you?"

That is only one of my 2022 highlights. As you read the rest, imagine singing the answers to the tune "The 12 Days of Christmas."

**12 SENIOR GRADUATES!** Special recognition to **Elijah Yates**, who invited friends every week to youth group! We recognized six of those friends on Senior Sunday.

**11 EPIC BIBLE STORIES** were depicted by the children, youth, and their families at our 2nd Annual Trunk or Treat event in October.

**(The) 10 COMMANDMENTS** in song and actions were featured on Day 1 of Vacation Bible School of Rock. More than 20 kids attended in July 2022.

**9 HOLY-WEEK SCENES** were powerfully portrayed by our children and youth during the Walk-through Holy Week event, the Last Supper reenactment, and the Good Friday service.

**8 PEANUT BUTTER TOPPINGS!** Stop & Go supper invited guests to create their own Peanut butter and [blank] sandwich to teach the Bible verse, Proverbs 18:24, "A true friend *sticks* by you like family."



#8 Choosing toppings for peanut butter sandwiches during Stop & Go Supper.

**7 CAROLERS SINGING** to Trinity families & friends.

**6 ADVENTURE BIBLES** given to new JAM friends!

**5 YOUTH COMMITTED TO CHRIST** and joined the church in May. Welcome, **Aianna, Ellie, Hannah, Janelle, and Kael!**

**4 DAYS OF MISSION** in Minneapolis! We packaged onions in 40# bags for the Food Bank, worshipped at Temple Israel, attended a Christian concert, and spent a day at Valleyfair Amusement Park in August.

**3 RAKE N RUNS!** Three non-members were surprised by this leaf-raking service project in October.

**2 ASTRONAUTS WAVING** in the Frontier Day's Parade. Thanks, **Mike S**, for joining me in the church's spaceship.

**AND A BABE LYING IN A MANGER!** This occurrence is why the Christmas season leads us to an Empty Tomb!



## Tech Booth Technician Appreciation

By Jared Feddersen, chair Worship Committee

The Worship Committee did not meet this month; however, we would like to take this time to congratulate and thank our 2022-2023 Tech Scholarship recipient, Elijah Yates! Elijah is attending Iowa Central and continues to be a blessing to Trinity with his diligent work in the Tech Booth on Sundays. This fall, Elijah also helped install tech equipment in the Fellowship Hall. He also organized many of the cords and equipment in the Sanctuary Tech Booth. Thank you, Elijah, for your hard work and dedication, and thank you to the Memorial Committee for funding this scholarship.

## Hot Water Restored, Boilers Pass Inspection

By Trustee Committee

Recently, it was noted the hot water heater that serves the south restrooms was not working. In fact it was kaput! Thanks go to Travis Filloon for its quick replacement.

Also in December, our three heating boilers were inspected by the State of Iowa. The inspector found no issues and issued new annual operating certificates. Let's pray they keep us warm all winter long.

## Hey, Seniors! Apply for Scholarships

By Patsy Pukacz, chair Memorial Committee

The snowflakes are falling, and the weather outside is frightful, but Spring will return, and with it, high school graduation.

It's time to start thinking about scholarships. If you are a student and member of Trinity, you might be eligible for two different scholarships that we offer. To apply, stop at the office and ask for the form to complete. If needed, Ryan can email it, too!

Additionally, the Iowa UMC conference offers many scholarships. If interested, pick up a flyer with more information at church or check out: [iumf.org/%20scholarships/](http://iumf.org/%20scholarships/) Apply between 12/1/22 - 3/1/23!



## Strong Finish for 2022 Anticipated

By Mark Marner, chair Finance Committee

As we move from 2022 to 2023, I want to thank all of you for your financial support and active involvement in other aspects of our church's life. When we all work together to reach His well-articulated goals, God's Kingdom here on earth is strengthened.

November total income was \$21,391 while total expenses were \$26,140.



December offerings are often significant, and I trust that will also be the case this year.

Our investments, managed by the Iowa United Methodist Foundation (IUMF), demonstrated solid gains for the second month in a row. We are pleased with the financial service provided by IUMF and look forward to continuing this relationship.

May you all be richly blessed through your Christian faith in 2023 and throughout the upcoming years.

## Goal Set: Mating Cow and Alpaca Pairs

By Jayne Cassidy & Carol Etzel, co-chairs Mission Committee

The Mission Committee met in early December to discuss our projects. Presently, we are collecting money for the Heifer Project. Our goal is to buy two sets of mating cows and two alpacas; the collection runs until the end of the year.



People can donate using the quarter tubes or place a Heifer envelope (displayed near the gathering room) in the offering plate. You may also write "Heifer Project" on the memo of your check. We thank those who have already contributed and those who may still contribute.

For January, we will serve a Manna Meal on January 28 at the First United Methodist Church. We furnish the meal and prizes for bingo which is played after dinner. We will discuss it further at our next meeting on January 3 at 5:00p.

# Leadership Training Workshop

By Rev. Jena Finch-Manchester

Our Circuit Ministry Team comprises United Methodist pastors and laity from Calhoun, Hamilton, and Webster counties. We have been meeting monthly to check in and build relationships with each other. If someone has a need, we are in prayer for them and rally to support them in any way we can.

One pastor got COVID, and her health declined to a point where she could not speak. She simply has no voice except for a few squeaks. Our circuit rallied to find people to fill the pulpit so that her members could still gather for worship.

We have discussed questions about various teams or committees in the church and how they function. The question about finances came up and how we handle money. One church has two people take the offering to the bank on Sunday after worship and just deposits the entirety. The bank will send the church a list of who gave and how much. Another church has two people count it in the sanctuary right after worship.

Yet another church locks the offering away until Monday morning when 2 or 3 people count it and record the donations. All of these examples are fine.

What would not be fine is the church that has one person take

the offering home to record and count, the church that holds the money until the end of the month and then deposits the entire amount, or the church that uses the offering to teach their children about money as they all help to count the money.

When I start a new appointment, I like to teach about the role and responsibilities of each team or committee so that everyone has the same understanding of how each team functions. Sometimes the teams overlap and collaborate on a project. The size of the church also plays into how the teams work together.

Our circuit will host a Leadership Training workshop for any United Methodist Church. You don't have to be a part of our circuit to participate. The Leadership Training will be on Saturday, January 7, from 9a-12p, right here at Trinity UMC. Each participant can attend up to 3 sessions led by one of our ordained elders. Each session will be approximately 45 minutes, and you will have 15 minutes to find the next session, use the restroom, grab a cinnamon roll, chat with a friend, etc.

Our current leadership list needs to fill a few vacancies, so this would be an excellent opportunity to hear about what each team does to see if it is for you! If you are planning to attend, please let the office know. It would be embarrassing to run out of cinnamon rolls! Thank you!

## Facebook Page Updates Underway

Work is underway to make updates to Trinity's Facebook page. Recently we created a new page, but it is under construction, so be kind. Visit: [facebook.com/people/Trinity-UMC-Fort-Dodge/100087815026790/](https://facebook.com/people/Trinity-UMC-Fort-Dodge/100087815026790/)

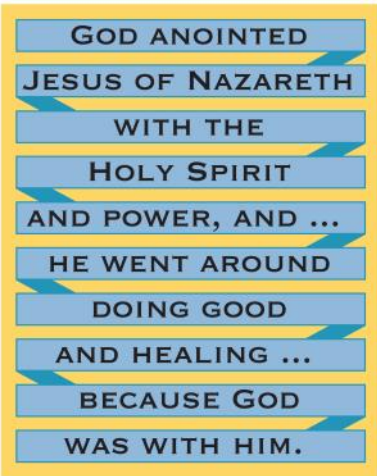


Happy Birthday to ...

- 3 Lawrence Hartley  
Jenni Yenger
- 6 Jason Laird
- 7 Andrew Arends
- 9 Charlotte Breaser
- 10 Ryan Rippentrop
- 11 Karen Hilpipe  
Tabitha Johnson
- 13 Kathy Arends
- 14 Brian Murman
- 15 Grant Barber  
Rhonda Olson  
Amelia Pratt
- 18 Norma Hughett
- 22 Karen Nelson
- 23 Robert Menzel
- 24 Lynette Nielson
- 25 Marie Feddersen  
Charles Shelton  
Travis Thompson
- 26 Ralph Ewing
- 28 Jayne Cassidy  
Terry Lee
- 29 Staci Laird
- 30 Ralph Bryan  
Kennedy Jo Kuhn
- 30 Robert Ropte
- 31 DJ Campney

Happy Anniversary to ...

- 10 David & Elaine Kilian



ACTS 10:38, NIV



Please keep this handy list for your reference during the year.

Service terms run until December 31 of year indicated behind name (i.e. 24=12/31/2024)

**KEY:**

(V) Vacancy

(C) Chairperson(s)

A/C Annual Conference

Titles without name or year (i.e. Lay Leader) indicates is a member of group. See Admin. Council for name.

"Rep." may not be chairperson.

**Administrative Council**

Chairperson (V)

Vice-Chair (V)

Recording Sec. Patsy Pukacz

Finance Chair Kraig Barber

Finance Secretary:

Patsy Pukacz, Sharon Perkins,  
Diane Larson

Treasurer Anne Manz of  
Trevino & Assoc.

Historian (V)

Lay Leader (V)

Lay Member A/C Gary Astor

Membership Sec. (V)

Leadership Dev. Pastor Jena

Memorial Rep. Patsy Pukacz

Missions Rep. Carol Etzel &  
Jayne Cassidy

Outreach Rep.

Trustees Chr.

Worship Jared Feddersen

UWM Pres. Deloris Soppeland

**Finance Committee**

Chairperson Kraig Barber

Vice-Chair (V)

Secretary Brooke Barber

Financial Sec. see above

Treasurer see above

At Large:

Renee Maulsby, Brad Arends

Approve Invoices:

Bonnie Yoder, Karen Hilpipre

Auditors (2-3):

Gary Astor, Frank Farmer,  
Vickey Messerly, Kate Stuart,  
Val Wehde

Admin. Council Chr.

Lay Leader

Lay Member A/C Gary Astor

SPPRC Rep.

Trustees Rep.

**Leadership Development /**

**Nominating Committee**

Pastor Jena Finch-Manchester (C)

Lay Leader

Kathy Arends 23

Leanne Hartley 23

Jan Wilkens 24

Vickey Messerly 24

Amanda Pratt 25

(V) 25

**Staff Pastor Parish Relations**

**Committee (SPPRC)**

Lay Leader

Val Wehde 23

Don Peart 23

(V) 23

Zelda Farmer 24

Bruce Murman 24

Jenni Yenger 24

(V) 25

(V) 25

(V) 25

**Board of Trustees**

Brad Wehde 23

Joan Feddersen 23

(V) 23

Donna/Ralph Bryan 24

Don/Donna Madsen 24

(V) 24

Travis Filloon 25

Tim Yates 25

Nick Salmon 25

**Christian Education**

Laura Stover (C)

Nicole Smith 23

(V) 23

Amanda Pratt 24

(V) 24

Kaitlyn McIntyre 25

Deb Shelton 25

**Memorial Committee**

Donna Bryan 23

Mary Larson 23

Carol Etzel 23

Shari Netz 24

Patsy Pukacz 24 (C)

Rhonda Wiley 24

Regina Barber 25

Susan Peters 25

LJ Hartley 25

Thank you to all of  
our leaders who  
served in 2022.  
Let's make 2023 a  
year to remember!

**Missions Committee**

Carol Etzel 23 (C)

Sharon Perkins 23

Kim Peart 23

Bob Menzel 24

Ramona Peterson 24

(V) 24

Jayne Cassidy 25 (C)

Ruth Babbitt 25

Jana Nelson 25

**Outreach Committee**

Brielle Alexander 23

Katrina O'Brien 23

(V) 23

Bana Starrett 24

Karine Feddersen 24

Jenni & Glenn Yenger 24

Jane Harbaugh 25

Kathy Arends 25

(V) 25

**Worship Committee**

Ex-Officio:

Communion Steward, Pianist,  
Organist

Kate Stuart 23

Jared Feddersen 24 (C)

Norma Hughett 25

Colette Salmon 23

Laura Stover 24

Peggy Barkhaus 25

Katrina O'Brien 23

(V) 24

Lilly Johnson 25

**Adult Bible Study**

Solveig Lundgren

**Caring Ministry Team**

Rae Anne Frey Marner

Mark Marner

Kudos  
to our  
worship  
team for

*You're*  
**amazing!**

all the great music  
during Advent and to  
Laura for finding people  
to share the Advent  
candle readings.

**THANK YOU!**  
*thank you!*

# January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <b>New Year's Day</b> 9:30am Worship - Blended / Livestream	2 <b>Office Closed</b> <b>Holiday Observance</b> 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	3 9:00am Trinity Quilters 5:00pm Missions Committee	4 9:00am Accountant 10:00am Coffee With Friends 8:10pm Sr. High Bible Study	5 8:30am Trinity Bible Study 9:30am Community Bible Study	6 <b>Epiphany</b> 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness 3:30pm JAM Epiphany Party	7 9:00am Leadership Training 5:30pm Worship - Casual
8 9:30am Worship - Blended / Livestream	9 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	10 9:00am Trinity Quilters 11:00am Teen Parents Group 5:30pm FD Quilter's Guild	11 10:00am Coffee With Friends 8:10pm Sr. High Bible Study	12 8:30am Trinity Bible Study 9:30am Community Bible Study	13 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	14 5:30pm Worship - Casual
15 9:30am Worship - Blended / Livestream	16 <b>Martin L. King, Jr. Day</b> 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	17 9:00am Trinity Quilters 11:00am Teen Parents Group	18 9:00am Accountant 10:00am Coffee With Friends 6:30pm Choir	19 8:30am Trinity Bible Study 9:30am Community Bible Study	20 <b>Newsletter Articles DUE</b> 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	21 5:30pm Worship - Casual
22 9:30am Worship - Blended / Livestream	23 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	24 9:00am Trinity Quilters 11:00am Teen Parents Group	25 10:00am Coffee With Friends 3:30pm JAM - Jesus & Me 5:00pm Rachel Circle 5:00pm Stop & Go Supper 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm Confirmation 8:10pm Sr. High Bible Study	26 8:30am Trinity Bible Study 9:30am Community Bible Study	27 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	28 Manna Meal - Missions Committee 5:30pm Worship - Casual
29 9:30am Worship - Blended / Livestream	30 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	31 9:00am Trinity Quilters 11:00am Teen Parents Group	1 9:00am Accountant 10:00am Coffee With Friends 3:30pm JAM - Jesus & Me 5:00pm Stop & Go Supper 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm Confirmation 8:10pm Sr. High Bible Study	2 8:30am Trinity Bible Study 9:30am Community Bible Study	3 9:00am RSVP BASE Fitness	4 5:30pm Worship - Casual

**Thanks**

I want to thank all of our singers and instrumentalists, who have been so generous with their time throughout this holiday season. Your gifts and talents are part of what makes Trinity such a special place during such a meaningful time of year. Additionally, thank you, choir members, for the very thoughtful gifts I received during the Cantata.

It's an honor to be your director. Merry Christmas, Jared Feddersen



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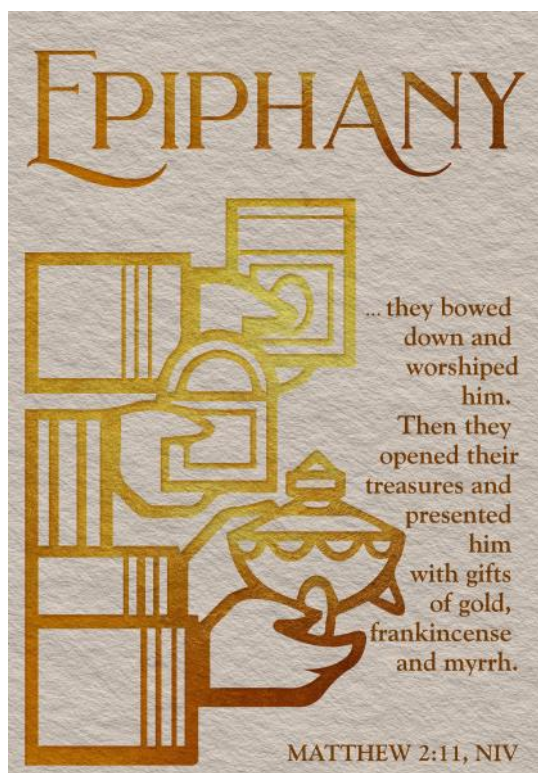


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**THANK YOU FOR READING  
OUR NEWSLETTER!**

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### PURSUE JESUS & YOUR PASSIONS

If you struggle with making and keeping resolutions, you're not alone. It can be discouraging to focus on what you're doing "wrong" and all the difficult changes in store. Yet January offers great opportunities to listen to God's direction. After all, Jesus came to give us abundant life and wants us to pursue Him.

As you review the previous year, ask: What brought me joy? How did I grow? How did I help others? What did I do that no one else could have done?

Whether your list includes spending time outside, mentoring or coaching young people or making crafts to give away or sell, continue doing what brings you joy. God gives us each unique gifts and circumstances, so live passionately for Him this year! —Janna Firestone

*From The Newsletter Newsletter Jan. 2023.*

On January 6 Christians celebrate Epiphany [ih-pif-uh-nee], when the Magi came to worship baby Jesus. Epiphany, which means an appearance or manifestation, symbolizes the first recognition of the Savior by non-Jews. Because Epiphany also is a reminder that Jesus came as the light of the whole world, its symbols include light, candles and a star.