



Vol. 26, No. 10

October 1, 2024

## Trunks 'n' Treats

Our annual Trunks 'n' Treats event will be held on October 25, from 5-7 p.m. Check out pictures from last year! Over 175 volunteers are needed to make this event a success and there are jobs that fit any schedule. Would you consider being a part of the evening?

**Volunteer:** Decorate, serve food, monitor inflatables, set up/tear down etc. To sign up, watch your email for the TCB "Needs Request" coming soon. Or click this [link](#) or scan the QR code.



**Donate candy for the trunks.** A candy collection box is located in the foyer, gathering space and narthex.

**Donate children's books** for the Stephen Ministers to hand out at the event.

**Donate apples, Cuties (mandarin oranges), toothbrushes and toothpaste** for the Health Cabinet's "No Junk in Our Trunk".

**Make a financial donation** to help offset the cost of the food and games. Please place a check in the offering plate designated for Trunks 'n' Treats or give [online](#).





**BRATS BEER**

**MUSIC GAMES**

**Oktoberfest**

**OCTOBER 13, 2024**  
**11:30 AM - 2:00 PM**  
**(FOOD SERVED 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM)**

**INVITE YOUR FRIENDS**  
**FREEWILL DONATION**  
**BRING YOUR TRINITY STEIN**

BEER COURTESY OF  
**SAINT ARNOLD**  
PATRON SAINT OF BREWERS

**SCAN THE QR CODE IF YOU CAN HELP**

## Youth and Children's Ministries Update

Hey, Trinity Families!

September was great! The youth had a great time playing laser tag together and preparing for our haunted house adventure the first week of October.

We began preparations for our summer trips with an information meeting. If you need information about one of our three summer trips, please let me know.



Our Children's Ministry event is Trunks 'n' Treats and I am really looking forward to this year's event! You never know what kind of characters you will see there! I hope you join us!

Haley Davisson, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries

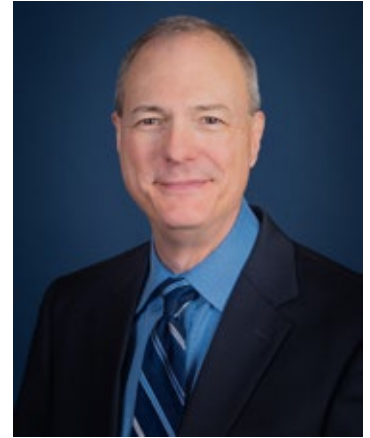
### 2024 GOVERNING BOARD

- Jim Baccus** (Elder)
- Lori Dixon**
- Pastor Michael Dorn**
- Mike Gilmore** (Elder)
- Tim Grady** (Chair/Elder)
- Ross Krueger**
- Brent Laumen**
- Cassandra McGarvey** (Vice-Chair)
- Marie Munier**
- Mary Oliver**
- Chris Sonneborn** (Secretary/Elder)
- Mike Sterling** (Elder)

*Minutes of the Governing Board meetings are available to our members at the Welcome Center.*

# Congratulations to Ron Lacy on His Retirement

Ron Lacy joined our staff as a consultant in September 2013 and became the Chief Financial Officer of Trinity Downtown in September 2014. After eleven years at Trinity Downtown, Ron has decided to retire. Ron has been a very important part of ministry while at Trinity and will be extremely missed. Ron fulfilled many tasks at Trinity including capital campaign management and annual pledge programs, management of major facility repair and upgrade projects, review and approval of vendor contracts, management of worship service video streaming, hybrid Discipleship Hour tech support, oversight of HR processes and matters of IT systems. Ron was also commissioned as a Stephen Minister in 2015 and played an important part of that ministry.



**Please join us on Reformation Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, as we wish Ron God's blessings in his retirement.** We will have a reception in the Gathering Space following the 9:00 a.m. worship service and a basket will be available for those who would like to leave cards and well wishes.

## A Message from Ron

I've been active in a church my entire life. (I'm sure I tagged along with my mom *in utero*!) Over the course of my life, I've led our church's youth group, sung in the choir, taught adult Bible classes, been on several church Boards, been a missions coordinator, and acted as church Treasurer. My life has been full with my beautiful wife, two sons and a career serving in global law firms and IT consulting organizations. When the ministry opportunity at Trinity presented itself, however, I felt God clearly prompting me to a season of full-time church work. I fell in love with Trinity, its pastors, staff and congregation.

Life is all about relationships, and I cherish the friendships that I've been blessed to find here at Trinity. It truly is a special place, filled with people that are following Jesus. Although Trinity has gone through some "rough patches" over the last decade, God has been faithful to guide and provide. Through it all, it has been a true blessing to serve this wonderful community.

As LaNell and I discover what God has for us in "retirement", we expect to continue worshipping and serving at Trinity as our schedule permits.

After all, it's all about relationships!

## Nominations for the 2025 Governing Board and Nominating Committee Are Now Being Accepted.

Nomination packets are available at the Welcome Desk.

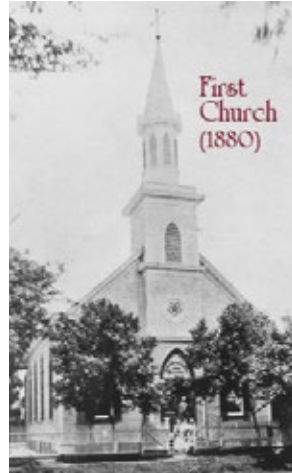
Nominations must be submitted to the church office by noon on Monday, October 14th.





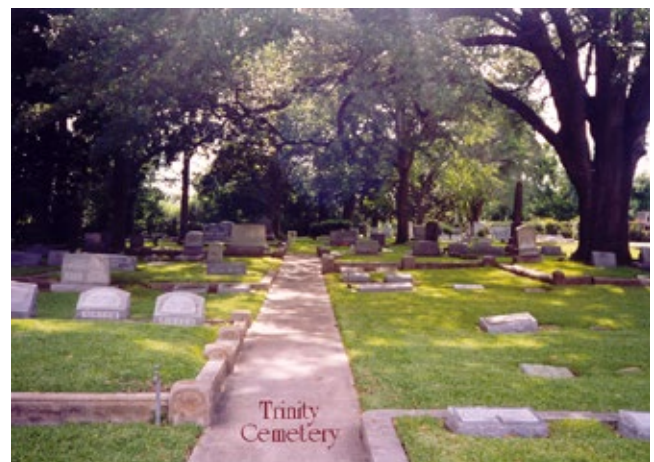
# Trinity Chronicles: A Glimpse Back in Time

Twenty-four men met on November 9, 1879, to found Trinity Lutheran Church and School, the first Missouri Synod congregation in Houston. Property was purchased in the 400 block of Louisiana in downtown Houston (present site of the Lyric Center) as the location for the first sanctuary and school, dedicated on November 28, 1880. This site was occupied for 25 years when the congregation purchased property at 12 Riesner Street at Washington Avenue. A school building and brick veneer sanctuary were built and dedicated there by 1905. Through the years more property was purchased facing Houston Avenue and the present sanctuary was constructed and Trinity's address became 800 Houston Avenue.



Trinity's founding member Dr. Henry Nehrling, (1853-1929) was the first church secretary and the first teacher in the school. He was a graduate of the Lutheran Teacher's Seminary in Illinois and taught in Lutheran schools in Illinois, Missouri and Texas. He became interested in Ornithology (birds) and Horticulture (plants) at a young age. This interest continued and was fulfilled in 1885 with the purchase of acreage in Gotha, Florida, where he established "Palm Cottage Gardens". He became a leading Horticulturist working with the FSDA experimental stations testing over 3000 plants, 300 of which became tropical and subtropical plants in Florida. He wrote books, essays, and articles for magazines and became well known internationally as an Ornithologist and Horticulturist. "Palm Cottage Gardens" has been preserved and continues today as an education center focusing on horticultural and environmental conservation. Many events are scheduled throughout the year for individuals and children to tour the gardens and the Nehrling home. In 2000 the site was placed on the National Register of Historic Sites. In 1917, Dr. Nehrling also established a garden in Naples, Florida, known as "Tropical Gardens and Arboretum" and today is part of the Naples Zoo.

On January 31, 1881, Trinity Lutheran Church purchased property for a cemetery located at 500 Sawyer Street. It was cleared and platted for its dedication on July 24, 1881, located one mile west of Trinity's campus. It currently has remains of some 450 sainted Lutheran individuals. These include the remains of men that served in the military beginning with the Spanish-American War in 1898, and a number of former pastors and staff members of Trinity. In 2013, new fencing, entrance gates, brick columns with signage and paved entry at the main entrance was installed. In December 2014, two Columbarium's were added with vase niches for above-ground remains.



In 1933 a new brick school building was built to replace the wooden structure on Riesner. It was unique in that it had a bowling alley in the semi-basement and a gymnasium on the upper floor. This building served until 1995 when it was demolished for construction of the Christian Life Center in 1996. The school educational building at 1316B Washington Avenue was dedicated in 2011. Trinity's school was closed in 2017 after 137 years because of low student enrollment. On May 21, 2017 a "Service of Thanksgiving and Praise" was held in thankfulness for the many years of Christian education provided through the school. The building is being leased to LEAH and they operate the Day-Care Center.



During the early years and into the present, Trinity has been blessed with dedicated pastors and teachers. Trinity's first pastor was the Rev Timothy Stiemke and that blessing has continued through the years with Rev. John W. Behnken, Sr. (served Trinity for 27 years and was elected President of the Missouri Synod from 1935 to 1962); Rev. Oliver R. Harms (served Trinity for 24 years and was elected President of the Missouri Synod in 1962); Pastor Donald Black, currently serving as Visitation Pastor has served Trinity actively since 1958. He became Senior Pastor in 1960 until repositioning in 1997. Since 2005, Pastor Michael P. Dorn has served as Senior Pastor and Pastor Lonnie Gonzales has served as Associate Pastor of Outreach since 2022. Outstanding teachers and principals of Trinity Lutheran School included Emil Schultz serving Trinity as teacher and principal for 50 years (1913-1962) and after retirement continued as a substitute teacher and school consultant; Teacher Oswald Mueller served for 21 years (1923-1944) and was a noted Entomologist and published a book of poems in 1953 "A Child's Book of Nature Verses" and was also noted for translating "Roemer's Texas" a history of early Texas, from the original German language into English. A member that served Trinity's youngest children was Mrs. Esther Lampp who retired in 2002 after serving as the principal Nursery Attendant for 45 years. To be continued next month.



Rev. John W. Behnken, Sr.



Rev. Oliver R. Harms



Principal Emil Schultz



Rev. Donald Black



Rev. Michael P. Dorn



Rev. Lonnie Gonzales

Written by Ruth Stoerkel, Trinity Archivist and Historian.

*Celebrating 145 Years of Ministry!*



# Finance Corner - October 2024

...for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7b ESV

Tithes and offerings for the month of August totaled \$140k and were \$5k below our budget for the month. **For the year so far, total discretionary giving is \$33k lower than our budget. Summertime has ended with three Sundays of tithes and offerings “missing” from our giving.**



You'll recall that we missed one worship service due to May's Derecho, and July's contributions were significantly lower than normal, probably due to Hurricane Beryl's enduring disruption to our city.

Your gifts of time, treasure and prayer are an important way you can participate in sharing the love of Christ to our city, **so please prayerfully consider how the Lord would have you respond to our financial shortage.** We know many were personally financially impacted by the recent weather events, but if you are able to help us bridge the shortage, your extra gifts will be greatly appreciated!

Our year-to-date operational expenses through August totaled ~\$36k higher than budgeted and were ~8% higher compared to spending during the same period in 2023.

Our Fall Kick-Off was a huge success. It was the most well attended in recent memory. The lunch provided by the Holy Smokers was, as one might expect, world class. The Youth enjoyed wrapping up summer with a trip to Splashtown.

Here's a quick summary of “visible results” for August 2024:

August 2024 Summary				
<b>Average Worship Attendance</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>In-person</b>	<b>Online</b>	<b>August 2023</b>
	445	291	154	437
<b>Avg. Discipleship Hour Attendance</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>August 2023</b>
	166	111	55	165
<b>Contributions</b>		<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Last Year</b>
August 2024 tithes and offerings		\$140,257	\$145,000	\$133,969
Total YTD 2024 tithes and offerings		\$1,089,691	\$1,222,227	\$1,018,600

Joining Jesus alongside you,  
Kim Davis, Executive Director

## Trinity Ladies Circle Ministries

Trinity Ladies Circle Ministries' next meeting is in the Gathering Space on Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. with a time of fellowship beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Our program will be a report by Trudy Mitchell and Sharon Stoerkel on the LWML Texas District 43<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Convention which was held June 13-15 in Corpus Christi. We will also begin planning for our annual Bazaar and Bake Sale on November 17<sup>th</sup>.



Trinity Garrett will have our devotion and opening prayer and Marie Munier and Ann Gunn will serve as hostesses.

All ladies are welcome. For more information, feel free to reach out to Trudy Mitchell, President at [trudyam99@hotmail.com](mailto:trudyam99@hotmail.com).

# Let's Celebrate Haley and Alex's Wedding!

Our DCE, Haley Davisson, is getting married to Trinity member Alex Zimmerman on November 10, 2024! The couple would like to invite all of the Trinity Downtown members and friends to join them during the ceremony in the sanctuary at 2 p.m. on Sunday, November 10<sup>th</sup> and greet the newly married couple in the gym following the ceremony.



## From the couple:

"It's truly a joy for us to be loved by so many people and we want to share our love with everyone that God has blessed us with, following Jesus' commandment from John 15:12, "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." We thank Trinity Downtown for all your love and support as we walk the journey to the altar and we want to make sure everyone gets a chance to celebrate with us on this special day. We are grateful for your continued support and wisdom as we step into this next chapter of marriage."



We Love Y'all!  
Alex and Haley Zimmerman

# Membership Changes

The following are the changes to membership approved at the September Governing Board meeting.

## MEMBERSHIP IN

### Transfer

- None

### Baptisms

- Reese Avery Fritsche — 08/25/2024
- Margo May Fritsche — 08/25/2024
- Hailey Scott Hatcher — 08/25/2024
- Hyland James Hatcher—08/25/2024
- Pierce Matthew Hatcher — 08/25/2024

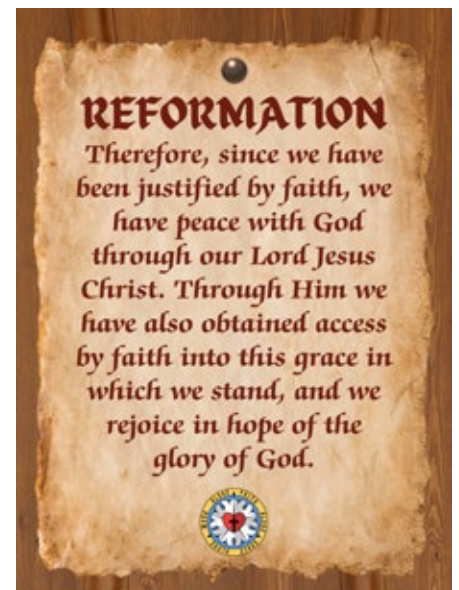
## MEMBERSHIP OUT

### Transfer

- None

### To Glory

- Douglas Steill Meaden III — 8/27/2024
- Shirley Calhoun — 8/30/2024



# Lutheran World Relief

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) is an organization which works with Lutherans and other partner organizations around the world to end poverty, injustice and human suffering. LWR was created in 1945 to provide relief to Europe after World War II and has continued providing help and support to over 37.3 million people in 40 countries including Lebanon, Ukraine, Chile, and South Sudan. When disaster strikes, LWR provides life-saving relief and support to those most in need and continues long after the headlines have faded, working with communities to rebuild their lives and recover their livelihoods. LWR, along with local partners, helps people to have access to clean water and health care, teaches people about water management, diseases of poverty, and agricultural techniques, and provides people with the skills to participate in the decision making processes that affect their lives. Small-scale farmers have access to markets through LWR such as Fair Trade Coffee and Fair Trade Chocolate. LWR is part of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative to eliminate deaths from malaria in Africa. To learn more about LWR, go to [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org). The Ladies Circle Ministries members support LWR by assembling the kits of care. The Houston area gathering of the quilts and kits to be sent to LWR will be on Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Ladies Circle Ministries members want to encourage our Trinity family to make the kits of care. A kit is a simple expression of comfort to those suffering, of love to those in need, and of dignity and hope in the direst situations. Please bring your kits to church by Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup> and put them in the LWR container in the church office.

## PERSONAL CARE KITS

- 1 bath-size towel (approximately 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- 2 bath-size bars (4 to 5 ounces each) of soap, any brand, in original wrapping
- 1 adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging\*
- 1 sturdy comb, remove packaging
- 1 metal nail clippers, remove packaging



\*Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing the individual toothbrush in a business envelope; no plastic bags or wrap.

Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed. All items should be new or in good condition. Wrap all items in the towel and tie securely with ribbons or yarns. Do not use any plastic bags.

## SCHOOL KITS

- 4 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper, approximately 8" x 10½"; no looseleaf paper
- 1 30-cm ruler or ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other side; pack in a notebook
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 1 blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- 5 unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers; secure together with a rubber band





- 5 black/blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink); secure together with a rubber band
- 1 box 16 or 24 crayons
- 1 2½" eraser
- 1 sturdy drawstring backpack-style cloth bag, approximately 14" x 17" with shoulder straps (no standard backpacks)

Do not add other items or leave out any item listed. All items should be new and in good condition. Remove excess packaging; pack all items in bag and close. Do not enclose the kit or any of its items in plastic bags.

**BABY CARE KITS**

- 2 light weight cotton t-shirts (no Onesies®)
- 2 long- or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers (without feet)
- 2 receiving blankets, medium weight cotton or flannel or crocheted or knitted with light weight yarn, up to 52" square
- 4 cloth diapers, flat fold preferred
- 1 jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt with hood, or include a baby cap
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 hand towel, dark color recommended
- 2 bath-size bars (4 to 5 ounces each) of gentle soap, in original wrapping
- 2 diaper pins or large safety pins



Sizes up to 24 months may be used. Varying sizes of the clothing items will make the Baby Care Kit useful as the baby grows. Sweaters with buttons or tie down the front are preferred. Diapers can be made from flannel. Gently used, clean items (no stains or tears) may be substituted for new ones. Wrap items in one of the receiving blankets and secure with diaper pins. Do not enclose the kit or any of its items in plastic bags.

Donated items should not have any religious symbols, messages or Trinity's name or be decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.

**BOARD OF ELDERS - CONTACT INFORMATION**

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# Children, Youth and Adult Bible Studies

Please consider joining one or more of our Bible studies. It's a wonderful way to begin a new spiritual discipline. Virtual login information is available on Trinity's website [www.trinitydt.org](http://www.trinitydt.org). Children and youth classes are in person unless indicated otherwise. Adult classes are either virtual, in person or hybrid.

## SUNDAYS - CHILDREN (10:15 - 11:15 AM)

**Nursery** (Infants - age 2) - Room 234

**Kingdom Quest 2 & 3 year olds** - Room 233

**Kingdom Quest 4 & 5 year olds** - Room 232

**Kingdom Quest 1st Grade - 4th Grade** - Kingdom Hall (basement)

## SUNDAYS - YOUTH

**Foundations 56** (5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 207

**Confirmation** (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 208

**High School** (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Underground

## SUNDAYS - ADULT

### Discipleship Bible Study - The Whole Story - Creation to Jesus

Led by Group of Members - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 125 - In Person

This Bible study series covers creation through the redemptive story in the Old Testament. It is perfect for people interested in learning a simple and reproducible model to study Scripture in a group setting. The study is sponsored and facilitated by a committed group of members at Trinity Downtown. Participants can come and go throughout the series.

### Judges

Led by Pastor Paul Dorn - 7:00-8:00 PM - Virtual

How does God respond to people who forget that He has kept His promises to them and provided for them? How does God respond to people who often do not fear, love, and trust in Him above all things? The Old Testament book of Judges gives us a look at the flawed condition of human beings (God's people included) and reveals God's answer then and now to the questions above.

This class meets virtually for an hour every Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. Please email Paul Dorn ([pbdorn6@gmail.com](mailto:pbdorn6@gmail.com)) and he will send you his class notes and a link to the class session on Zoom. You will need a computer, laptop, or phone.

### Parenting with Purpose - "Habits of the Household"

Led by Mike and Katherine Gilmore - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 206 - In Person

It definitely takes a village. Come join in a refreshing and engaging Bible study tailored for young families, to help build our community. This study offers a relaxed, interactive environment where parents can come together to explore Scripture, share insights, and grow in faith as a community. We will take a book club/discussion format, rotating a new book every few months. Our first book will be "Habits of the Household" by Justin Whitmel Earley. Materials will be provided, if needed.

### Membership Class

Led by Pastor Michael P. Dorn - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 123 - In Person

Class for those who want to discover more about Trinity Downtown and the Christian faith.

### The Bible Alive ... God In Action

Led by John Reisig - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 124 - In Person

In this study, each Sunday offers a single, stand-alone topic. The material covered each week will provide a meaningful experience for regular participants, visitors to Trinity Downtown, and for those simply looking to get





back into a routine of attending Bible study. The single topic format insures that no one will be lost or feel behind during the study, and will feel welcome and encouraged to attend at any time. Bibles will be provided and utilized each week. Providing historical context to the scriptural message, and modern application of His word, the Bible will "Come Alive," and show that God has been working throughout history, and is still working today out of love for His people.

### **The Gospel of Mark**

Led by Bill Fischer - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 201 - Hybrid

The Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels and is thought to be the first one written. It tells the story of Jesus Christ from the foretelling of John the Baptist through Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. There is less detail than in the gospels of Matthew, Luke or John and it has a feeling of urgency in telling the good news. The word "immediately" appears many times. Join us either in person at Trinity or remotely through Zoom as Mark introduces Jesus to the world as both God and Man and the salvation for all people.

### **The Sermon on the Mount**

Led by Jim Cleary - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 205 - Hybrid

How should we live? How should we treat others? How should we handle money? What is the good life? Join us as we explore these questions and plenty of others as we examine Jesus' most important sermon on how His followers should live.

### **The Spiritual Life - A Study on 1st Corinthians**

Led by Pastor Jose Flores of Casa 'de Oracion - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 211 - In Person (Spanish Speaking)

Paul writes to the Church in Corinth instructing them regarding spiritual life in the context of the local church. The Church is called to live a life empowered by the Spirit of God.

### **Young Adult Bible Study - Psalms**

Led by Class Members - 10:15-11:15 AM - Gathering Space - In Person

The young adults are studying Psalms 90-106. Those Psalms center around the Reign of God and we will focus on looking for His reign in our lives. There will be a heavy emphasis on prayer and learning to pray the Scriptures as we study.

## **TUESDAYS - ADULTS**

### **Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study - LifeLight: Ruth & Esther**

Led by Karen Maynard - 10:00-11:30 AM - Room 205 - Hybrid

This study is part of the LifeLight Bible study series of in-depth studies of Bible books. The goal of LifeLight is that through a regular program of in-depth personal and group study of Scripture, more and more Christian adults may grow in their personal faith in Jesus Christ.

## **WEDNESDAYS - ADULTS**

### **Psalms**

Led by Mary Oliver - 6:30-7:45 PM - Virtual

Our group will look at a different Psalm each week. This will allow everyone to participate as they can without getting behind in the study. Please join us. We meet Wednesday evenings on Zoom from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. and in person the last Wednesday of the month.

### **Virtual Midweek Spiritual Check-in**

Led by Jim Cleary - 7:00-8:00 PM - Virtual

## **THURSDAYS - ADULTS**

### **Sonrise Bible Study**

Led by Bill Fischer, Pastor Black and individual class members - 7:30-8:30 AM - Virtual

This member-led virtual class primarily discusses the Scripture readings assigned for the following Sunday. The class is open to men and women. For more information contact Bill Fischer at 832.459.3241 or the church office.

# Trinity's Archives Collection

Trinity's archives collection is pleased to add donations of the original USA flag that adorned the classroom of Trinity's beloved teacher, Miss Ruth Stelzer, Trinity commemorative plates, photographs, books and various items related to Trinity's history. Donors include Dottie Burroughs, Bill Eickemeyer, Bobby and Judy Stevens and Janis Taube. All donations to the archives collection are greatly appreciated.



## Trinity's Foyer Displays

During 2024 the foyer display cabinet emphasized the theme based on Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." The display included memorabilia related to trains including a Souther Pacific wall decor, photos of train yard turnarounds, Missouri and Southern Pacific pencils, train locomotives, railroad switch keys, hand-embroidered towel, Southern Pacific coffee mug, statue of a train engineer, a wonderful pull-out book about trains, and other memorabilia including the theme verse.

The present revolving display is from Trinity's archives collection featuring Trinity's 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding on November 9, 1879.

To arrange a display of individual collections in the cabinet contact Ruth Stoerkel at [FWS1Pub@earthlink.net](mailto:FWS1Pub@earthlink.net).

**Life  
got  
you  
down?**

Stephen Ministry provides confidential, compassionate Christian care.  
For more information, contact  
Pastor Lonnie at 713-229-2905 or [lgonzales@trinitydt.org](mailto:lgonzales@trinitydt.org).

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