

The Good Word

A monthly newsletter of Trinity United Methodist Church

Volume 25, Issue 2

February, 2026

Come & See ...

Thoughts From Bill

A Word From Mike

Lenten Bible Study

Congratulations Ellie Howle

Trinity E-Blasts

AED Training

(UMW) Ladies Prayer & Self-Denial Event

UMM

Lenten Luncheons

Ladies Valentine Craft

Altar Guild

Home Touch

Thank You Notes

Altar Guild

Flower Calendar

Memorials & Gifts
Sympathies

Prayer List

Birthdays & Anniversaries



*Open Hearts
Open Minds
Open Doors*



Create in me
a pure heart,
O God,
and renew a
steadfast spirit
within me.

Psalm 51:10, NIV





A Simple Ring?

Last month we joined J.R.R. Tolkien in an English pub in Oxford, England. There we met his contemporaries as each shared a gift and love for writing and the Christian religion. In our area C.S. Lewis is better known, and I think we would do well to learn from Tolkien.

In his children's book, Tolkien talks about a "Ring of Power." It's a magic ring. It has a history. Through the story we discover one character found the ring. Another character came upon it by chance – Christians call this "Providence". The ring grants power to whomever is wearing it at the moment. It's rather fickle. We like the character stumble onto this knowledge.

Like most things magical there exists more to the story.

The power granted is real. When a character is presented as more powerful, the ring goes further allowing the powerful character to become even more powerful. It becomes debatable whether this is a good thing or not. There is the rub. Since this is a Christian story, it becomes a cautionary tale for all its readers. For we soon discover the very construction of the ring was to give power but with evil intent. As the person began making use of the ring, it slowly took hold of the person. The further twist came as the ring took the good the person sought and turned it toward evil.

The ring offers a powerful metaphor for sin in the life of the believer.

Tolkien wants his readers to see more clearly the Christian use of power to work for good, God's ways. It's a good thing. We pledge to do this in our baptism. We do this right after pledging to follow Jesus. At the same time we are also encouraged to be wise in our judgements about power. A healthy respect for power and its effects is a good thing also. A good example comes from Jesus' own teachings, "He who lives by the sword dies by the sword."

More importantly, Tolkien wants his readers to know how sin affects everyone. We all fall short of God's glory. Sin does have a way of taking our most noble impulses and turning them when we are not careful. We do not need to fear sin, but we do need to respect its tendency to tarnish our best intentions.

Bill



Here is an update on the progress of our Fresh Expression.

We launched Fresh Expressions in September and met in Aynor 7 times from September through December. Our goal was to reach people outside the reach of our church in the Aynor area. Jesus made the mission simple: go make disciples. Some of the meetings brought some deep reflections from those who were experiencing loss, hurt, anxiety, and community disconnect. I have contacted the city of Aynor to request any available weekdays. Aynor leadership has informed me that there are no weekdays available. I have scheduled several more meetings on Sundays moving forward.


What we call a fresh expression is, at its simplest, a pattern for believers to share their faith in their everyday lives. It was a practice Jesus used with his disciples. It was a practice that the Church Fathers developed to reach and disciple believers across the ancient world—a meal, fellowship, music, and message.

I'm still looking for volunteers to assist with serving food, greeting, and fellowship at the tables during meals. We do it naturally in our church and homes. I want to connect with the community, which you already do. If you're interested in learning more, please don't hesitate to contact me. I'd love to have a cup of coffee or two and answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your encouragement and prayers.

Blessings

Pastor Mike





YOU'RE INVITED TO A FIVE WEEK
LENTEN STUDY OF,
"WHY EASTER MATTERS" LED BY PASTOR
MIKE AND THE RESOURCES BY ANDY
STANLEY. THE STUDY WILL FOCUS ON
THOSE SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND THE
SIGNIFICANCE OF EASTER THROUGH THE
LENS OF BIBLICAL TEACHINGS. THE
STUDY AIMS TO HELP US EXPLORE THE
LIVES OF KEY FIGURES IN THE GOSPELS
WHO INTERSECTED WITH JESUS'
CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION,
OFFERING INSIGHTS INTO THE EVENTS
THAT SHAPED THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.
PASTOR MIKE WILL LEAD THE STUDY ON
SUNDAY MORNINGS IN THE JOY CLASS
FROM FEBRUARY 22 TO MARCH 29.
THIS CLASS IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS BEGINNING
FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 25 FROM 4:00-
5:30PM, WHERE THE JOY CLASS MEETS.

ARE YOU RECEIVING OUR CHURCH
E-BLASTS? IF YOUR ANSWER IS "NO",
PLEASE LET JENNIFER KNOW THAT YOU
WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED. YOU CAN
SEND HER AN E-MAIL LETTING HER
KNOW TO ADD YOU TO THE LIST.
JDONKLE@TRINITYCONWAY.COM



Congratulations!

Trinity UMC is so proud of
Ellie Howle! Ellie has been
accepted into the Upper Level
Nursing Program at
The University of South Carolina.
Next time Ellie is home, make sure
to congratulate her, or if you have
the time, drop a card in the mail.

Way to go, Ellie!!





AED Training



TACKLE HUNGER CHALLENGE



BE A GAME CHANGER!

FROM JANUARY 26 THROUGH FEBRUARY 8, 2026, WE WILL BE COLLECTING NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS TO HELP STOCK THE PANTRY AT THE SHEPHERD'S TABLE. THIS WILL HELP PROVIDE NOURISHING MEALS TO INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN NEED.

Chocolate is sweet,
but
God's
love
is even
sweeter.





UMW Prayer and Self-Denial Event

Monday, February 2nd at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall

Join us for a time of fellowship, refreshments, and encouragement

All ladies are invited.



United Methodist Men-Monday, February 16h at 6:30 pm in the Cordie Page building

Ladies...mark your calendar for February 3rd and join us at 10 am for a Valentine craft (pictured to the left). Sandy Smith will once again lead us in making this adorable heart. Cost is \$12 and there are enough spots for 15 ladies. Sandy will have all the supplies, you just need to bring your scissors. Please let Jennifer know if you would like to take part.

LENTEN LUNCHEON CALENDAR THURSDAYS AT NOON

February 26th hosted at Kingston Presbyterian Church
800 3rd Avenue, Conway
Speaker: Rev. Emily Kirby

March 5th hosted at First United Methodist Church
1001 5th Avenue, Conway
Speaker: Rev. J. Robert Bannan, Jr.

March 12th hosted at Trinity United Methodist Church
198 Long Avenue, Conway
Speaker: Rev. Kyle Randle

March 19th hosted at First United Methodist Church
hosted by Saint Anne's Episcopal Church
1001 5th Avenue, Conway
Speaker: Rev. Bill McCown



Scripture Reading: Matthew 17:1-9

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear! It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear. —John Newton

I've stood on a few mountaintops in my lifetime, like, for example, the Klein Matterhorn in Switzerland, Pikes Peak, Mount Evans and Longs Peak in Colorado. To get to the top, one requires a cable car, two can be conquered by car, but the last insists on a good pair of legs. There's another one: Mount Tabor in Galilee, known as the traditional site of the Transfiguration. A few years ago, my daughter and I drove to the top where two churches sit, one a Franciscan chapel.

Of course, our minds wandered back to the gospel accounts (like the one in today's reading from Matthew) about what happened long ago. On that mountain, Peter, James and John experienced something utterly breathtaking. They saw Jesus transfigured before their eyes. His face shone like the sun, his clothes dazzling white. Then Moses and Elijah appeared, representing the Law and the Prophets. It was a moment of scary splendor, filled with meaning, history and wonder. And yet, in the end, the cloud of glory lifts, the visions fade, and all that remains is Jesus only. How powerful is that? These three disciples saw many things that day, but in the end, their eyes were drawn to the one who mattered most: Jesus.

As we grow older, our lives often become quieter but not necessarily less cluttered. There are still distractions: health issues, financial concerns, the noise of the world on TV, worries for loved ones, regrets from the past or questions about the future. These distractions, while real, can blur our spiritual vision. They can keep us from focusing on the One who is the source of peace, purpose and hope.

But in this mountaintop moment, we are reminded of what truly matters. It's not Moses. It's not Elijah. It's not our past or future, our regrets or our fears. It's not the noise of the world or the uncertainty of tomorrow. It's Jesus only.

And here's the good news: we don't have to climb a mountain to see him. Wherever we are, whether in a quiet room, a hospital bed or our favorite chair by the window, we can look up and find him near. He is with us. Always. —Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, in a world full of distractions, help me to focus on you alone. Just as Peter, James and John saw only you at the end of the vision, help me to look past my worries, my aches, and my fears to see your face. Be my vision today, and always. Amen.



Give Thanks unto the Lord; for He is good. Psalm 106:1

Dear Trinity Members,

Thank you for the visits, prayers, phone calls and cards sent to me when I was in the hospital and in the weeks that followed.

Thanks also for the food when I returned home from the hospital. It was delicious. I will never forget the love and kindness shown to us during this time.

Burnett & Geraldine Owens

Dear Friends,

Our family has been truly blessed to have our Trinity family to support us with your thoughtfulness, many kindnesses and prayers at the time of Larry's passing.

We are taking each day as they come and ask for your continued prayers.

Anne Woodle and Family



February Flower Schedule

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Feb. 1 | In love and memory of Stan Cross by Martha Cross |
| Feb. 8 | In memory of her parents, William and Catherine Brown by Judy & Charles Gidney |
| Feb. 15 | In memory of her mom, Janet Turner, and in honor of their grandchildren, Ellie, Emery, O'Neil, and Patrick, by Janet and Pat Howle |
| Feb. 22 | In praise of the Lord and in appreciation of all the staff and volunteers by Marilyn Holcombe |



February:
Jerri Woodle
Linda Gainey



February:

February. 1	Rosemary Reid
February 8	Ailey Covington
February 15	Whitley Gainey
February 22	



Given in memory of....

Larry Woodle

Mr. & Mrs. Pat Howle
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Cates.

Given in honor of...

All February Birthdays

Merilyn Holcombe



Rev. McCown and the entire T.U.M.C. family and staff join in expressing sympathy and Christian love to:

Amy Price and family following the death of her father, Fred Thomas

Chris Bond and family following the death of his grandmother, Annette Bond

Andy Fowler and family following the death of his mother, Marilyn Maria Fowler

The family of Janet Mayers





We Care for One Another

Claiborne at W. Lake

557 Furys Ferry Rd, Martinez, Georgia 30907
Janet Mayers

Arbor Landing

3105 Dick Pond Rd., Myrtle Beach, SC 29588
Carrie Raymor (Apt. 101)

Mullins Nursing Center

2829 E. Hwy. 76, Mullins, SC 29574
Ruby Pittman (Rm. 355)

Spring Oak Assisted Living

2310 US-378 Conway, SC 29527
Dorothy Dietrich (Rm. 515)

Homebound

Barbara Thompson

7523 Misty Wood Rd, Knoxville, TN 37938

Pat Rose

1011 Moore Lane, Conway, SC 29526

Pete & Lettie Byrdic

3025 Chesbrough Blvd, (Apt. 316)
 Rock Hill, SC 29732

Robert & Irene Booth

3840 Wilmot Ave.
 Columbia, SC 29205

Russ Nixon

114 Jessica Lakes Dr.
 Conway, SC 29526

Ed & Gail McNew

Apt. 331-Maple Brook Terrace
 150 Verdin Rd., Greenville, S.C. 29607

Sandra Parler

4178 Bradford Dr.
 Conway, SC 29526

Pete & Martha Johnson

833 Shaftesbury Ln.
 Conway, SC 29526

B.G. Gantt

16 Holly Cr.
 Greenville, SC 29607

MEMBERS

John Wright
 Lana Fortson
 Anne Woodle & Family
 Wade & Kim Hohenforst
 Marie Skipper
 Lynn Spires
 Rich & Phyllis Eisenman
 Cheryl Robertson

Mary & Kip Miller
 Martha Cross
 Vance & Jennifer Donkle
 Kathy Gray
 Pat & Eddie Gerosa
 Beth Brinson
 Merrell Floyd
 Tina Hubbard
 Phyllis Koch
 Linda Hendrick
 Jason Owens
 Sharon Black
 Tamara Tindal
 Burnett Owens
 Susan Wiseman
 Dr. Dick Rush
 Art & Sandy O'Brien
 Karen Nobles

MEMBERS' PARENTS

Gene Keller (Jennifer Donkle's father)
 Shaula Richardson (Mother of Tamara Tindal)
 Mary Hopkins (Mother of Bryan Hopkins)

MEMBERS' FRIENDS & FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH

Janice & Danny Elmer (Jerri Woodle's friends)
 Harmony Fields (daughter of Ralph Fields)
 Ralph Fields
 Mike & Chris Cloderfelter (friends of Gene & Cookie Johnson)
 Rev. Carl Hunsucker

MEMBERS' FAMILY

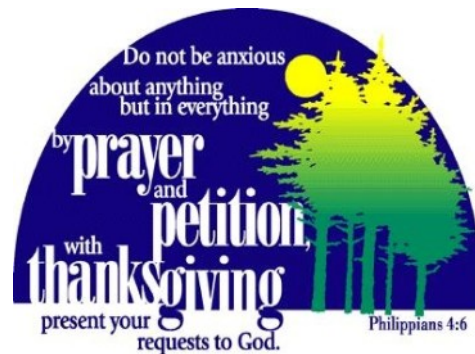
Bret & Bryn Ginn (son-in-law & daughter of Lana Fortson)
 Cynthia Inman (Donna Cartrette's sister)
 Pam Broun (sister of Beth Suggs)
 Ruth Ellen Coffey (sister of Mary Miller)
 Betty Coggeshall (sister of Linda Hendrick)
 Frankie Collins (sister of Pat Gregory)
 Charles Johnson IV (son of Pete & Martha Johnson)
 Ellen Wright (cousin of Cynthia Gantt)
 Eddie Garrison (Brother of Helen Emmons)
 Gina Fennell (daughter of Carolyn Norris)

Armed Forces

Eliza Edge
 Samuel Weitzman (nephew of Marti Hubbard)

**Are there any among you
 sick? They should call for
 the elders of the church
 and have them pray over
 them.**

James 5:14



OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Hayes Blackwelder
 614 Elgin Ct
 Myrtle Beach, SC 29579-3332

Ellie Howle
 USC, 1615 Rice St
 Columbia, SC 29205

Luke Skipper
 566 J.P. Stevens Rd
 Seneca, SC 29678

Austin Suggs
 1100 Bluff Rd, Unit 507
 Columbia, SC 29201

John (J.D.) Murdock
 Attn: FMU Housing
 51430 East Palmetto St
 Florence, SC 29506



**Please let us know if your
 phone number has changed
 and/or if you have dropped a
 land line. Please update your
 preferred phone numbers and
 emails. We want to stay
 connected!!**



FEBRUARY

BIRTHDAYS

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 2 | Braxton Blackwelder | 24 | Kyle Strickland |
| 3 | Libby Cates
Samantha Heinz
Denise Wilson | 25 | Torri Siena |
| 5 | Lex Johnson | 26 | Lois Edwards
Hunter Brown |
| 7 | Margaret Jordan | 27 | Joey Johnston
B.J. Branyon
Finnley Altman
Ava Anderson |
| 8 | Tammy Boyd
William Suggs
Danny Wysong | 28 | Katie Brookshire
Chandler Cochell
Olivia Browning
Kenley Fox |
| 9 | Rick Morehouse
Marcia Small | 29 | Larry Dickerson |
| 10 | Donna Cartrette | | |

ANNIVERSARIES

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|-----------------------|
| 11 | Andrew Brown
Tami Seeders
Lona Siena
Kathleen Sellers | 5 | Mary & Kevin Tovornik |
| 12 | Don Freudiger
Brie Black
Lucy Foote | 8 | Louie & Cynthia Welch |
| 13 | Nancy Winiarski | 15 | John & Anne Creel |
| 14 | Ed Grove
Marifaith Jordan
John Stewart | 16 | Jim & Dee Nesbit |
| 15 | Saundra Parler
Kim Wysong
Chloe Brown | 22 | Furman & Ann Long |
| 17 | Harry Foote
Desmond Farrington | 28 | Adam & Mandy Tobin |
| 18 | Jeff Davis
Marley Crotts | | |
| 20 | J. D. Murdock | | |
| 21 | Gray Strogen
Richard Eisenman
Sudie Thomas | | |
| 22 | Grey Altman
Nikki Hudson | | |



LADIES...SAVE THE DATE
FOR OUR ANNUAL



OCTOBER 14TH - 18TH

FOOD | FELLOWSHIP | FUN

BANNER ELK, NC

All information that is to be included in the next month's **Good Word** needs to be in the church office by the 20th of each month.



The LORD is
compassionate
and
gracious,
slow to
anger,
abounding
in love.

Psalm 103:8, NIV

**TRINITY
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH**

...a Stephen Ministry Congregation
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Jan Bitting, Financial Administrator/Internal Auditor

RALPH FIELDS, Facilities Maintenance