

Sunday Worship @ 10:00 am each week

Sunday School & Branching OutSunday School for all ages @ 9:00 am &
Branching Out Kids
Church during Worship

Sermon Series:

BASICS

10:00 am Worship
Part 1:
What We Believe
About God
Starting January 21st

Annual Congregational
Meeting will be held
January 7, 2024 following
the 10:00 am service.
Copies of the Annual
Report will be emailed
out the week prior to the
meeting. Limited paper
copies will be available at
the meeting.

2023 Giving Statements will be available January 14th in the elevator room at the front of the sanctuary.

Tidings

VOLUME 98, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2024

Back to Basics in 2024

Happy New Year! As we step into 2024, I am filled with gratitude for the journey we've shared and the adventures that lie ahead. The beginning of a new year is always a special time—a chance to reset, refocus, and recommit ourselves to the incredible journey of faith.

This year, I'm excited to announce that we'll be taking a journey "back to basics." In over 15 years of professional ministry, I have heard so many people express fear and anxiety that they don't understand the basic tenants of our faith. Furthermore, many express that they don't understand these concepts well enough to explain them to others.

Whether it's parents of Confirmation students considering what they have forgotten, or church members fearing they couldn't lead even a single Sunday School class or small group session because of a lack of knowledge. This year we want to stop all that! This year, we're going to spend time rediscovering and reinforcing the foundation elements of our faith.

The Bible reminds us in Proverbs 4:7 (NIV), "*The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.*" Our journey "back to basics" is about gaining a deeper understanding of our faith, exploring the fundamental truths that form the bedrock of our beliefs. In the coming months, we'll dive into key scriptures and themes that resonate with the core of our Christian identity. Together, we'll reflect on the timeless wisdom found in passages like Psalm 119:105 (NIV), "*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*" Let's allow the light of God's Word to guide us in our personal and collective journeys

Here's a simple yet powerful call to action for our congregation in 2024: Let's commit to spending intentional time in prayer, personal reflection, and engaging with God's Word. Set aside moments in your day to connect with Him, and encourage one another to do the same. Together, let's create an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit can work and transform our lives.

I am genuinely thrilled about the journey that lies ahead. The foundation of our faith is strong, and as we invest time and energy in these basic principles, I believe we'll experience renewed joy, growth, and an even deeper connection with our Creator.

May God's blessings abound in your life this year, and may our journey "back to basics" be a source of inspiration and transformation for us all. In Christ,

-Pastor Ryan Shields

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Council Minutes: November 2023



Council regularly

Church monthly

meets at the

2nd Monday

at 7:00 pm

in the Coffee

Room next to

the Kitchen

on the

The Trinity United Church of Christ, Elliston Church Council met on Monday, November 13 at 7:10pm. Rebecca Reif, President, called the meeting to order, and Pastor Ryan Shields opened with prayer. Those in attendance were as follows: Rebecca Reif, Pastor Ryan, Brittany Wittman, Eric Gahler, Emily Burcin, Brice Gahler, Marty Hoeft, Sam Sutter, Susie Shaffer

Reports

Recording Secretary:

Brice moved to approve minutes. Susie 2nd. MC.

Administrative Assistant + Financial:

Reports were reviewed. Admin report mentioned time for piano tuning. Worship Team recommended considering upgrading to a digital piano that would not need tuned annually. Plan to have future discussions of upgrading piano and possibly organ. Potential ideas will be brought to the next meeting. Current piano to be tuned.

Motion to accept reports made by first Susie, second by Brice, MC

Pastoral:

Serving Saturday was a huge success!

Let's Build Beds + Genoa Food Pantry had quite a few members in attendance.

Big credit to Janene on successful BooFest.

There was discussion that it was a great event, but would like more adult options.

Susie + Sarah said they would work with the person planning to provide that next year.

Angel Tree family + family in need discussed.

Eric moved to purchase a furnace up to \$2500 for a family within the Congregation in need + have congregation member(s) physically replace it. Emily 2nd. MC. Plan to fund through Angel Tree.

EFY

Family Retreat + Church Program priority right now.

Discussion about different size tables and chairs to accommodate our smaller kids.

Missions & Outreach

Angel Tree currently being worked on Vision Kitchen – very successful and consensus was many want to do it again

2030 Team No update. Need to meet.

Church + Ministry Staff evaluations reviewed by committee.

Landscaping No update

Trustees

IPS working on items under warranty

Discussed getting gas line to unit in Sanctuary to provide heat when boiler not available

Looking at replacement of all 7 thermostats. Marty motioned to approve up to \$500 for replacement of thermostats. Eric 2nd. MC.

Old Business Working on filling Council positions

New Business

Pastor Ryan needs a new computer. Sam moved to use up to \$1800 from the A/V Sinking Fund to purchase a new computer for Pastor Ryan. Susie 2nd. MC.

Member asked if could have same service for Christmas Eve morning and evening. After discussion,

— — — decided to keep different.

General Operating Fund (Council approved 12/11/23)

Beginning Balance 11/01/2023 \$36,482.42
Offering/Income \$14,330.82
Expenses \$10,730.36
Transfers \$0.00
Balance 11/30/2023 \$40,082.88

Member mentioned chimes were not working. Trustees going to look into.

Brought to our attention that we need to improve our procedures for checks + balances in our money handling. Two people will take the money down to office following offering and place into a lock bag before placing in safe.

Asked Pastor Ryan to leave the meeting. Staff evaluations + compensation were discussed.

Next meeting December 11 at 7pm.

Motion to adjourn meeting by first Brice, second by Emily. MC.

Meeting adjourned at 9:43pm by Rebecca.

Respectfully submitted by Brittany Wittman, Recording Secretary.



- Welcome to Theodore James "Teddy" Sutter, born December 26, 2023 to Luke & Faith Sutter. Teddy weighed 8 pounds 2 ounces and was 20 inches long. He has two big sisters: Lily & Elsie.
- Genoa student Tucker who had brain tumor surgery this week.
- Marty Sutter, recovering from knee replacement
- Doug Winters, recovering from prostate cancer surgery
- Dave Dresser, recovering from heart bypass surgery and complications
- Nate Diekman, Anna Diekman, and Delaney Johnson all recovering from knee surgery and Erika Hall, recovering from a knee injury
- Doug Avery recovering from many injuries from his fall
- Jackie Pelton recovering from an illness.

At Genoa Retirement Village: Don Hoeft, Jackie Pelton, Norma Reif

<u>Those with long-term health concerns:</u> Dawn Baker, Rev. Don Corbin, Emeli Gahler, Joel Marquart, Rayna Perry, Chuck Vizi, Deanna Vizi, Don Weaver, Steve Welling, Jamison (Jamie) Zimmerman

Those battling cancer

Logan Murphy, Jackie Pelton, Dustin Schmidt









Beginning Late Winter 2024 **Adult Small Group Opportunity**

Believing that small groups for prayer, study, and community are vital to the mission of Christ's church, a new ministry program will begin in 2024.

A couple from Trinity has graciously offered to lead the first of our small group ministries. This group will meet monthly, at the host home, from around 5:00-7:00 PM for a time of food, fellowship, prayer, and study. This group is designed to be a more intimate and open conversation where members can freely discuss life's challenges, seek prayer, and support and find community serving and growing together.

This group is not exclusive to married couples with children, however, these themes will be a recurring part of the conversation.

Participants are expected to commit deeply to the small group process and share in the accountability and confidentiality of a more personal discussion.

If you would be interested in joining this group please contact the church office.



We are seeking leaders to establish groups similar to the one listed above for singles, couples without children, or any other life stage that may interest you! Contact the church office to learn more!

Inclement Weather Announcement

Guidelines for Weather Cancellations at Trinity

Ottawa County Level 1:

Worship and church activities will be held as usual - please use common sense and precaution when traveling.

Ottawa County Level 2: All non-worship activities before and after worship are cancelled - this means no Sunday School/Branching Out, church dinners or meeting that may be scheduled, etc. The worship service will be held for those who choose to attend and feel they can travel safely. Please use common sense and precautión when traveling.

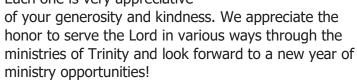
Ottawa County Level 3: No worship service or church-related activities



A financial gift was given to the Firm Foundation Fund by Suzanne Buhro in memory of Ralph Buhro, Matt Perry, our parents Ron & Angie Buhro, James & Donna Dittman

THANK Y

The Church Staff would like to extend a very big thank you to all who contributed toward their Christmas gift. Each one is very appreciative



Sincere Thanks,

Pastor Ryan Shields, Mary Muntz, Janene Lattimore, Amy Mathews

Thanks to the carolers for the lovely sons. Also appreciated the cookies, fruit and candy plate. Myron said he will take a refill anytime. Myron & Sara Zibbel

Thank you all who came to my house to sing the beautiful songs and also for the plate of cookies and candy. It was a wonderful night for me and I enjoyed it so much!

God Bless you all, Margie Bringe

What a crew of carolers came! It was nice to see so many in person and a plate of goodies, oh my! Thank you all, Eloise Hellwig

A big thank you to the group that stopped at my house to sing Christmas songs and for the delicious plate of goodies.

Don Bittner

Your thoughtfulness and support is greatly appreciated! Thank you for your most generous donation to our pantry ministry! We are helping (on average) 25 to 30 families and serving dinner to over 70 people each month! We could not do it without your help! God Bless you,

In His Service,

Pastor Lisa Anne Gregg, Light Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion



- \$50,000 starting funds for preservation and repair of Sanctuary Wing and Steeple (doors in the wings, brick work, water proofing, eavestroughs, flashing, etc)
- Cleaning, Organizing & Supplying Basement and Kitchen for ministry use
- Launching at least two smaller groups meeting monthly to improve church community and connection (one group for individuals/ couples with children, one group for individuals/couples without children). Training and equipping leaders to see these through.

NOTICE

\$50,000

\$45,000

\$40,000

\$35,000

\$30,000

\$25,000

\$20,000

\$15,000

\$10,000

\$5,000

\$4,516

As of

12/28/23

CLOSED FOR CLEANING

The Fellowship Hall will be closed from January 8th through January 11th for cleaning and sealing. Please refrain from walking on the gym floor these days. Thank you.









Download the Tithe.ly App

Firm Foundation Campaign Goals:



January's Mission Spotlight focus will be scholarships for Church Camp at Michindoh

To give toward Church Camp scholarships, simply write "Mission Spotlight" on your envelope or check memo.

How Do I Give to the Church and Its Ministries

Giving to your local church using

Tithe.ly is super easy! We offer a number of different ways to give to your church, as listed below:

#1 - Give on your Church Website at www.trinityelliston.org

Click on the link provided and it will take you to our secure Tithe ly page to set up your contribution.

#2 - Give Online

If you're on a computer (or any device with an internet connection), you can easily give to your church by heading to Tithe.ly/Give. Once there, search for your church, and fill in the giving form.

#3 - Give in App

Want to give to your church using the convenience of your smartphone? No problem! Download the Tithe.ly App from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play Store (Android). Once you've downloaded the app, create an account or log in, locate your church and tap "Give Now" to complete your contribution!



WORSHIP HOSTS NEEDED

Contact the church office if you would like to serve as a worship host for one of our upcoming Sunday Services.

Duties would include keeping the service moving along by introducing our speaker while Pastor Ryan is away, calling for the offering to be collected, and saying a prayer.

Trinity Reminders and Answers to How Do I... and What's That For...Questions

Drop Box Available

Need to leave a note or drop off offering when no one is in the office? There is a locked drop box available for you to use in the connecting unit hallway next to the water fountain (outside the coat room). The box is checked at least once each week.

Got An Item To Submit For The Next Newsletter?

Do you have good news or thank you's to share? Drop a note off or email them to the church office by the 20th of each month!

First Aid Equipment & Medical Supplies

There is first aid equipment and supplies in the basement kitchen for your use. There is also some first aid equipment in the kitchen pantry off the gym and an AED in the connecting hallway near the restrooms. We also are blessed to have many members in the health field who can assist as needed (and they've been needed!) at times.

We have been blessed with the donation of a few

wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, slings, bandages, ice packs, etc. that would help in a medical situation in the building or for someone in immediate need. There is no need for additional donations at this time. Let me know if we can help in any way.

Thanks for all the support and understanding! Robin Hansen

Use of the Church Hall or Basement

The church calendar of events is hanging on the wall outside the main office door. You can also view scheduled events on the church website calendar (www.trinityelliston.org). If you would like to reserve the hall or basement take a form from the pouch under the calendar outside the main office, complete it and return it to the office to be scheduled. You are now required to fill out a form for any event that you would like to have in the church (including any rollover events from year to year for holiday parties). Please do not just write on the calendar - we ask you complete the form first. Once the form is reviewed we will add it to the calendar. If you have any questions, please contact Mary in the office.

Trinity Logo Wear

You can now order items directly from bit.ly/trinityunitedchurchofchrist. If the item you would like is not listed simply call R&R Identification at 419-355-8206 or visit their shop at 160 S OH 590 Fremont, OH 43420 and tell them what you would like with the Trinity Elliston logo on it and they will be happy to make it to your specifications.

Table & Chair Sign Out

Sign-out sheet for tables and chairs is located in the closet across from the main office (on the back of the door). Contact the office to make sure you are on the list for the date you would like to use the tables and chairs. The only tables that are to leave the property are the older wooden style tables. The only chairs that are to leave the property are the wooden chairs. Both tables and chairs that may be taken out are located in the shed by the kitchen entry.





Do you feel called to visit with some of our older congregation members? Handbooks are available to help you with conversation starters as you get to know some of our older congregation members. Contact Nancy Turnow for more information.

Trinity UCC Elliston Council Job Descriptions

<u>President</u>

- ...see that all meetings of the Council are regularly called, to open and conduct such meetings, and to see to the execution of all resolutions.
- ...is empowered, with other members of the Council, to sign all contracts, loans, vouchers, and deeds in the name of the congregation. According to our Incorporation, the Council President, or his/her designate, shall be agent for the Corporation.
- ...shall be ex-officio member of all Church Committees.
- ...shall make elected officers aware of their responsibilities.

Vice President

- ...shall preside at all meetings where the President is not present and also when business pertaining to the President and his administration is before the congregation.
- ...shall be chairman of the Pulpit Search Committee and chief liaison agent between the Board of Christian Education, Family Life and Youth, and the Church Council, presenting Board recommendations for Council action.

Recording Secretary

- ...shall keep a record of all transactions at the meetings of the congregation and the Church Council, attend to all correspondence, and keep a list of all members and their addresses.
- ...shall sign all minutes of the meetings of the Council and congregation.

Financial Secretary

- ...shall be the Financial Officer of the Church.
- ...shall render a monthly report to the Council and an annual report to the Congregation based on the Treasurer's accounting.
- ...all records shall be audited bi-annually.
- ...shall bring all unpaid bills to Council for approval.
- ...shall call together the Audit Committee.
- ...shall be the Budget Coordinator for the Church.

Elders

- ...shall assist and support the Pastor in the spiritual affairs of the Church.
- ...shall be responsible for providing the elements for Holy Communion and their distribution.
- ...shall take heed in the high calling of their office, guarding faithfully all spiritual interests of the Church, visiting the sick, and ministering to the edification and comfort of all.
- ...shall endeavor to prevent strife and discord in the Church. If discord and disputes arise they shall try to adjust the difficulty in order that peace prevails.
- ...shall, as care-takers of the Church, be responsible for the visitation and counsel with members on the conditional list, trying to re-establish them as active members.

Deacons

- ...shall provide a schedule of ushers for all services, with the Senior Deacon serving as the head usher.
- ...shall be responsible for acolytes and instructing them.
- ...shall maintain order and good behavior at all services of worship of the congregation and other meetings of the Church.
- ...are responsible for affiliated services which they are to render to their Church.

Trustees

- ...shall see that all property of the congregation is adequately insured against loss or damage and shall provide for adequate liability insurance.
-shall see that the buildings are kept in good repair.
- ...shall be responsible for janitors in case of absence of regular janitors.

INVESTING IN OUR FRIENDS

This month I (Jay) went to Finland for a conference for people using the MyFriends training across Europe. There were people from 10 different countries, all sharing how God is working in their communities. It was so encouraging families, friends, and coworkers. They are truly living sacrificially for Jesus, and it is reaping significant fruit. Across their country, they have over 80 groups meeting weekly for Bible Discovery, a true glimpse of our vision to see one to see the community of believers there in Finland, and to hear stories of how God is using them in the lives of their group in each of the 212 municipalities in Slovenia.



Gal, and we have been talking about how he can apply some of the MyFriends principles with his classmates. He had a heart to share with them, but found it difficult to know where to start. After talking together, he was excited about how simple it is to share his own daily experiences with Jesus, and to offer to pray with them. We prayed together for his classmates, and since then, he has been of a difference Jesus makes in his life, and the great need for Jesus that his peers naving spiritual conversations every week. God has been showing him how much nave. A few of his peers have shown some interest in God, and we are praying Here, I have been meeting with a first-year college student from our church, that He will open their hearts to Him.

We too are trying to be faithful to share Jesus with the people around us. This month we taking the simple step of making Christmas cookies and delivering them to the neighbors on the street, and to Ari's classmates, some of whom we have not met. Please pray with us that this small gesture will open up doors for the gospel. We are so thankful for the privilege in joining God in the work He's doing as He draws people to himself across Slovenia. We know that you have many wonderful opportunities to invest in his Kingdom, and are blessed to have you investing with us. This year, we're trusting the Lord for \$7,000 in year-end gifts to keep reaching and equipping Slovenes like Gal for Christ. Your year-end gift will help us stay fully focused on the work God has put before us by covering some expenses this year for us, such as Zina's US citizenship process, and some other project locally and

can give securely online at https://give.cru.org/o859389 or if you'd like to beyond through Zina's coaching. Would you consider giving a year-end gift of \$100, \$200, \$500 or some other amount to help meet our need? You give by check, please reach out to us for help. We are so thankful to the Lord for you, and for your prayers in helping us reach Slovenes for Christ. God is advancing His kingdom across Slovenia. We're so grateful to walk by faith together with you. We trust however the Lord leads you to respond, and we pray that you know what a blessing you are to us. May the Lord continue to remind you of His great love for you especially this Christmas season



With love in Christ, Jay, Zina, Ari, & Milo Herman

*If you'd like to give a year-end gift, please go to: www.give.cru.org/0495875 DECEMBER 12, 2023



the snowy graveside of Mandi's grandmother whose untimely death a few days earlier brought us together to mourn her passing. She was 89, a woman who had been through many difficult days, yet was one of the most December 5. The day seemed anything but joyous. On that day, in Middlefield, Ohio, we were standing at joyful people I knew. As I stood there, three words came to mind that

displayed a huge smile; and her joy in the Lord was apparent to all. She loved esus and talked about Him wherever she went. While we will continue to described the legacy she had left: prayer, faith and joy. Grandma always mourn her passing, I also want to remember her joy.

book that has a lot to say about joy - which is pretty incredible because when be discouraged about and overwhelmed by, yet, every chapter of the book is Paul wrote it, he was literally in chains in prison. He had a lot that he could The last few months I have been studying the book of Philippians. It's a filled with joy. He was joyful that the Gospel was being preached, for the Phillipians' faith, for the reunion of friends and for the gift they had sent. He was truly joyful in some of the hardest of life's circumstances.

Lord as the ultimate source of my joy. He has given many good things to My journey in this area the last few months has lead me to focus on the

Pausing to notice what I'm feeling helps me to refocus and have a better perspective. Lastly, I have tried to see back and take a pause when things don't go the way I want....with the kids, the car, the water heater, loss, etc. enjoy, but when these things take His place, they disappoint. Another helpful exercise has been to just step Christmas cactus bloom, feeling the warm sun on my face and hearing the joy of our children as they share God's goodness in the small things throughout the day. Some of my favorite things of late are seeing our about their day.

I want to be joyful like Grandma Bontrager and like Paul. As I reflect on my own life and those around me, I can be easy to get swept away in the daily hardships, lose perspective, and miss out on the joy that God wants see hardship everywhere. There is death, disease, disappointment, loneliness, anger, and loss of all kinds. It us to experience. If you can relate, Philippians can be a good place to linger and let God speak to you. Christmas is just days away. On it, we celebrate one of the most joyous events of all time: the coming to earth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This season can be filled with many events and stress, but our prayer is that it would also be one filled with joy for you. We are so thankful for you; and it brings us joy to be friends and partners together in sharing the joy of knowing Jesus!

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Philippians 4:8

Ben, Mandi, Elliana, Jonathan & Noah

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| Trinity UCC | | | | | JANUARY 2024 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|--|----------------------------|---|--|
| No Court | Monday | Tipeday | Wodnocdow | Thursday | Friday | Cohunday |
| sonday | Moriday | Inesady | Wednesday | Indisday | riiday | saiorady |
| | New Year's Day | 2 | က | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| | Nyla Denman Kevin Gacksteffer Diana Tabbert Denny Bowman Sara Tabbert Scott & Analisa Williams | 8:00 am Coffee Fellowship | Ron Blevins | Amy Sutter | | Doug Lick |
| 7 | ∞ | 6 | 10 | = | 12 | 13 |
| 9:00 am Sunday School, Confirmation Class & Adult CC 10:00 am Worship w/ Communion & Kids Church 11:00 am Annual Congregational Meeting Hall: Gahler Jacob Helle Jasey Asher | Gym Closed for Cleaning 7:00 pm Church Council | Gym Closed for Cleaning 8:00 am Coffee Fellowship 7:00 pm Dartball @ Oak Harbor St. Paul UCC | Gym Closed for Cleaning Don Corbin Mackenzie Blevins Emma Roth | Gym Closed for Cleaning | Hall: Gahler Willow Scott | Hall: Gahler |
| 14 | 15 | 91 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 9:00 am Sunday School, Confirmation Class & Adult CC 10:00 am Worship & Kids Church Everett Anstead | Don Weaver Hannah Mathews | 8:00 am Coffee Fellowship 7:00 pm Dartball @ Mount Carmel | Evan Hoeff Kiera Moore | | Church Camp @ Michindoh Jessica Asher | Church Camp @ Michindoh Tidings Info Due Anna Suffer Logan McCloskey |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| Church Camp @ Michindoh 9:00 am Sunday School, Confirmation Class & Adult CC 10:00 am Worship & Kids Church | | 8:00 am Coffee Fellowship 7:00 pm Dartball @ home vs Millbury St. Paul UMC Christopher Liphart | Janene Laffimore Marty & Kristi Hoeff | Jamey Tabbert | Casi Johnson | Bella Hall |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |
| 9:00 am Sunday School, Confirmation Class & Adulf CC 10:00 am Worship & Kids Church Hall: Reserved Stephanie Helle | Hall: Reserved | 8:00 am Coffee Fellowship 7:00 pm Dartball @ home vs Genoa St. John's Hall: Reserved Bennett Gahler | Hall: Reserved | | | |





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Livestream: trinityelliston.org/livestream

Pastor: Ryan Shields

 $Pastor's\ Email:\ ryandshields@outlook.com$

Children's Ministry Director: Janene Lattimore Janene's Email: janenelattimore11@gmail.com