

AUTUMN EQUINOX BLESSING

THE LIGHT AND THE DARK ARE THE SAME IN LENGTH,
THEY HAVE EQUAL TIME AND EQUAL STRENGTH.

BUT SOON THE DARKNESS WILL PREVAIL,
AND THE LIGHT AND WARMTH WILL BEGIN TO PALE.

BUT DO NOT BE AFRAID, DO NOT DISMAY,
FOR THIS IS THE RHYTHM OF NATURE'S WAY.

REJOICE IN THE ABUNDANCE THAT THIS YEAR BEARS,
BREATHE DEEP IN THE COOLNESS AND CHANGE IN THE AIR.

HAVE GRATITUDE AND BLESSING, KEEP TOLL,
AND MAY THIS SHIFT OF NATURE ENLIGHTEN YOUR SOUL.

Trinity United Church of Christ

5200 Hilda Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63123

Rev. Mary Albert, Pastor
Cell Phone • (314) 707-9091

Steve Tate, Director of Music
Office Manager
Cell Phone • (618) 316-6586

Echoes of Trinity

Church Office Hours: Tues - Thurs 9-3
Phone - (314) 352-6645
Facebook - www.facebook.com/trinityuccstl.org
Email - trinityuccstl@aol.com
Website - www.trinityuccstl.org

OCTOBER 2022 • VOLUME 268 • ISSUE 5

This week Larry and I are attending a UCC Summit on the future of the church. It has been informative, thought-provoking and inspirational, and we will be talking about our experiences in the coming months. This morning Rev. Traci Blackmon told us a story about visiting an Aspen grove in Utah. As you probably know, Aspens share one interconnected root system. A stand of Aspens is considered one large organism rather than many individual trees. As one trunk dies, new saplings sprout from the common root system. This particular grove is believed to be the largest one in the world, containing 47,000 trunks. It has been named Pando which is Latin for "I spread out." Pando covers 106 acres of land in the Fishlake National Forest in Southern Utah. There are differing opinions the age of this expansive organism. Some scientists speculate Pando is at least 8,000 years old, which means it pre-dates the lives of Jesus and all the individuals whose stories are captured in our scriptures. Other scientists argue that Pando could be as much as one million years old.

It seems that Pando is endangered now. It has stopped spreading and may be declining. Draught has stressed the organism, and Mule deer and elk in growing numbers are feeding on young saplings before they can grow into mature trunks. Foresters are taking different approaches to help preserve the organism.

Hearing about Pando, and thinking generally of the Christian Church, my mind went to the image Jesus used of the vine and the branches from the 15th chapter of John:

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

Christianity is stressed. Organized religion is changing. Indeed, our whole world is facing threats from climate change, unequal distribution of resources, injustice, and violence of various kinds. Some of these factors are under our control, and some are not. There are many external conditions like this which make it difficult for the church to send up the new shoots we need to be healthy and thrive. We may think of ourselves as individual churches, however, we are all connected to one another and to our source.

One thing I am taking away from this Summit is that brochures, websites and on-line worship are all important, however, they will not save our churches from decline. We need to move beyond what is important to what is essential. In my opinion, it is essential for us to focus most on our connection with the vine and branches. The Spirit that flowed between God and Jesus, and which Jesus shared with his disciples, is the taproot of the church. That spiritual center anchors us in times of crisis and change.

As we consider our individual and collective spiritual health, let's keep asking ourselves, "what keeps us connected with the vine?" When we think about our priorities at Trinity UCC, let's put first and foremost our connection with the Divine. May God bless us as we nourish our roots and grow in the Spirit.

Peace and Blessings,
Pastor Mary

Friends Foundations Fall Festival

When the representatives from the Friends Foundation came to spread word about the work they do and accept a quilt for the auction, they told us about their big fundraiser. It is their Fall Festival in Washington, MO on Nov. 6th. The flyer is located in the vestibule on the table if more information is needed. They also left 50/50 raffle tickets if anyone is interested. This is a large fundraiser and the raffle ticket prices reflect the chance of a larger amount of money. The tickets are \$25 for 1, 3/\$50, and 10/\$100. We could go together and split winnings if enough are interested. Just spreading the word. If you have questions please see me and I will do my best to answer them. This is a great opportunity to help others.

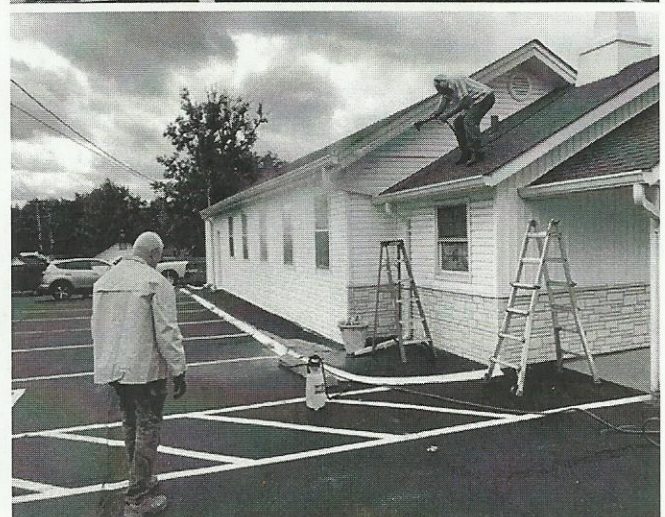
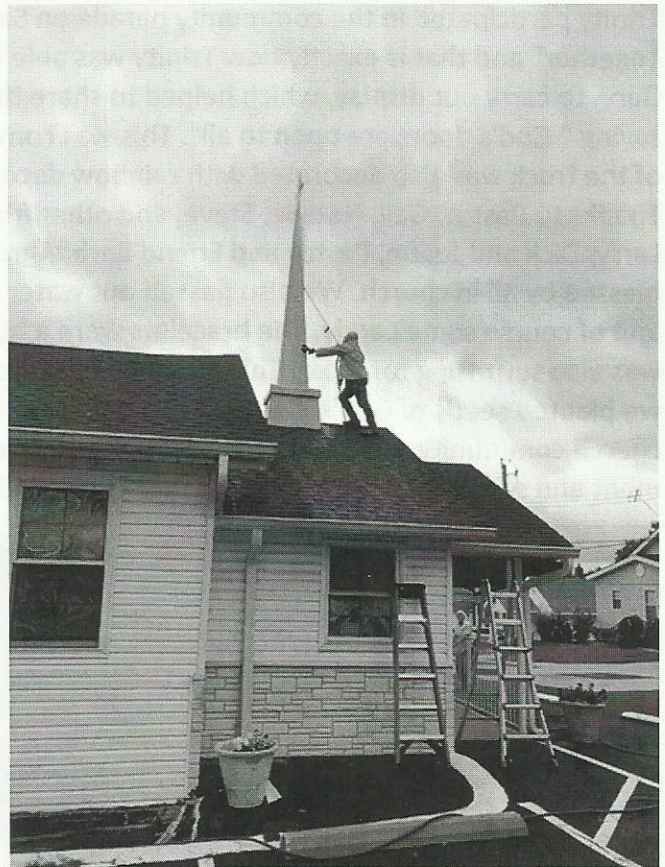
Thanks Angela

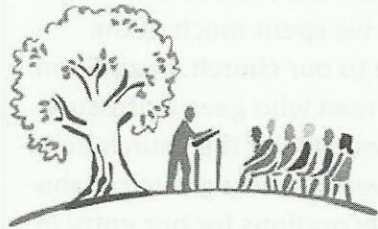


- 1—St. Louis Association Fall Meeting
- 2—Outdoor Worship - 10:30
- 5—Quilters - 9:00 am
- 9—Morning Worship - 10:30 am
Church Council
- 12—Quilters - 9:00 am
- 16—Morning Worship - 10:30 am
- 19—Quilters - 9:00 am
- 21—Happy Birthday Steve Estopare!!!
- 23—Morning Worship - 10:30 am
- 26—Quilters - 9:00 am
- 30—Morning Worship - 10:30 am
- 31—Halloween - BOO!!!

On Sunday, September 11, after an inspiring interactive sermon, we spent much of the afternoon in service to our church. In addition to the two “young” men who gave a pressure washer bath to the outside of the church building, people pulled weeds, and a group collaborated on planning decorations for our entry in the September 17, Affton Lemay parade. Prior to September 11, cleanup and painting were done at the entrances so we are ready for Fall!

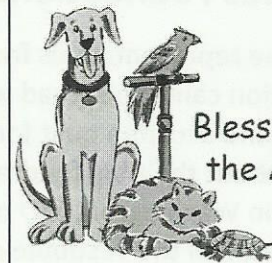
—JoAnn Grasfeder





Outdoor Worship Service

On October 2 we will be having our World Communion worship service at Ohlendorf Park. We will also include a Blessing of the Animals so bring your furry friends with you. Following worship we will share a potluck meal. Bring a side dish to share. Hot dogs and hamburgers or other sandwiches will be provided. There will be games and fellowship so plan to come and enjoy some time together.



Blessing of the Animals

Afton-Lemay Chamber Parade

Trinity participated in the community parade on Sat. Sept. 18th. The theme of the parade was "Let's Come Together" and that is exactly how Trinity was able to participate in the parade. We had a truck, thanks to Gary, to carry our display, which helped to share the message that Trinity's doors are open to all, with the saying "God's doors are open to all". This was conveyed on shutters painted in rainbow colors and the rest of the truck was also decorated with rainbow decorations and Trinity signs made by the talented Alexis. Thanks to Pastor, Gail, Natalie, Steve, and other friends for the help of decorating. Those of us who walked, Larry, Dick and Joann, Pastor and Friend Barb, Alexis, Natalie, offered prayer bracelets and coins, which were blessed by all in church. We also passed out water bottles with the church label, thanks to Janet and Carol, and of course some candy. The bracelets were a big hit with everyone, and the turn out of the community was also surprising for most. This was an amazing community event and opportunity to present Trinity. While we planted seeds of God's Blessings, we now pray for them to spread and grow. I am very proud of this church community and grateful for agreeing to give this event a shot. Here's to more community involvement and spreading God's Blessings and Trinity UCC!!!

welcome

