

Trinity Presbyterian Church
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Why we say: Presbyterians affirm Black Lives Matter

Why are we saying that “Presbyterians Affirm Black Lives Matter”?

Simply put: because Black lives do indeed matter. They/we matter to God, which means they/we should matter to God’s people.

Facing Racism: A Vision of the Intercultural Community, the PC(USA) Churchwide Anti-racism Policy, first adopted in 1999 and revised in 2016, proclaims the following:

“While recognizing that racism victimizes many different racial ethnic groups, we acknowledge its unique impact on the African American community. Given the particular forms that anti-Black racism has taken in the United States of America both historically (including slavery and Jim Crow) and today (including mass incarceration, disproportionate policing, economic inequality, and continuing acts of racially oriented violence and hate), we state clearly: GOD LOVES BLACKNESS. Too many have denied this basic truth for too long. Our choice to align ourselves with love and not hate requires both a rejection of racism and a positive proclamation that God delights in Black lives.”

But don’t all lives matter?

Saying unequivocally that “Black Lives Matter” in no way means that all lives do not matter. It is rather an acknowledgment that many lives – specifically Black lives – are systematically devalued. As a community that tries to follow Jesus, we proclaim that such a devaluation of our siblings is an affront to the Living God. The Confession of Belhar reminds us “that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged.” Specificity toward Black lives is necessary, particularly in this moment, so that we may acknowledge and address the inequities that prevent the whole community from living as if all lives matter.

Does that mean we are claiming affiliation with the Black Lives Matter organization?

As an organization, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has no affiliation or official status with the Black Lives Matter Movement. Presbyterians across the country are members of Black Lives Matter Global Network chapters, and many congregations actively support BLM efforts in their local communities.

I’m sorry, but I just cannot agree with supporting the Black Lives Matter organization.

We understand there are those in our communion who do not agree with positions of the Black Lives Matter Movement as they understand them. Presbyterians have always been invited to use discernment in matters of faith and practice, understanding that “God alone is Lord of the conscience.” We have never been required to be in lock-step with matters such as these.

However, in our discernment we must be careful that we do not expect that we, a majority-white institution, may determine the path of liberation and equity for Black people, nor should we expect that we may “correct” the goals and methodologies developed by any community we seek to support. In all justice efforts, we must be led by the ones who are impacted. Black Lives Matter provides a way forward formulated for and by Black people. And we need not wait for complete agreement with every position before we act in ways that are loving, bold and (again) directed by the communities with whom we want to align.

In his Letter from a Birmingham Jail, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of the tendency of the white moderate who says, “I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action,” and “who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another [person]’s freedom.” This tendency denies justice to the oppressed and slows progress and wholeness for the entire community. (cont. pg. 2)

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ATTENDANCE

11/8 - 60
 11/15 - 55
 11/29 - 62
 12/6 - 61
 12/13 - 59
 12/20 - 55

Actual program donations start of 2020 thru NOV: \$204,208
Budgeted program donations through OCT: \$201,237
Difference: +\$2,970



**PHONE NUMBERS!
EMAIL ADDRESSES!
HOME ADDRESSES!**
All At Your Fingertips!

Need an address? A phone number? Use the **Trinity online directory** or pick up a hard copy in the office. It’s constantly updated and made accessible to you for your convenience. If your info needs updating, please email the church office. If you need the directory password, please call the office. Trinity website: www.trinitywoodbury.org

We also note that King and many other justice-seekers of the time were constantly accused of sedition. They were labeled as communists who sought to undermine the United States and were surveilled mercilessly. Even in the church, they were accused of being anti-Christian for disturbing the peace of the community and the God-ordained order of society. Today we hear similar claims that Black Lives Matter is "violent Marxist" and seeks to undermine the American (and Christian) way of life. While again respecting the discernment of each, we must name that these labels are not only untrue but rooted in anti-Blackness with intent to frustrate the efforts of Black people seeking justice for themselves. These things must be confronted with truth. Black Lives Matter is very clear about who and what the collective is and consistently addresses misinformation about the movement on its website. It is just and holy to hear people speak of themselves in their own words. The lived experiences of Black people are not mere matters of opinion.

I fear that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is getting too political and hopping onto the latest bandwagon.

Presbyterians have long been "political." Civic engagement has always been part of the life of the church. The American Revolution and the structure of the U.S. government were heavily informed by Presbyterians. More nefariously, our articulation of the faith has also been used in service to the eradication of Indigenous people and the enslavement of African people on these lands. Prophets such as Henry Highland Garnet, Francis James Grimké, Gayraud Wilmore and Katie Geneva Cannon have all reiterated the gospel's clarion call for liberation and engagement with the state, even when we would not listen to them. Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the antecedent Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, was one of the organizers of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963. From the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Scots Confession, to the Theological Declaration of Barmen and the Confession of Belhar, our confessions have always instructed us on our role as Christians in the public square.

But before all these things, Christians were calling Jesus "Lord," which is a civic designation. Christianity is inherently political. The word "political" has its root in the Greek word for "people." Jesus commanded us to love God and neighbor. Our faith can never be extricated from our concerns for people.

Affirming that Black Lives Matter is very much in line with who we are as Presbyterians, and while the gospel of Jesus Christ is political, it is not partisan. It is not in service to any one political party or leaning, but challenges all of us to have righteous relationships with one another. We believe that justice for the oppressed is not and should not be a partisan value. Justice is a gospel value, one that all who claim Jesus as Lord should hold. We may have different ideas of how to live into the value, but as Christians we are beholden to it.

Article credit: <https://www.pcusa.org/weekofaction/#2>

November 16, 2020

A Tale of \$2 Talents

Dear Dr. Campbell,

You may think that this letter is somewhat strange but please bear with me. Our sermon that was given to us on Zoom last Sunday was based on scriptures from Matthew 25, verses 14 through 30. You are probably familiar with this text.

Ginger and I are charter members of Trinity Presbyterian but my job took me to Lincoln, NE sometime in 1987. We had many friends there and were happy not to drive across the Mississippi to attend South St. Paul Presbyterian. During those early years someone came up with the idea to give each family ten "talents" to be returned in a short time with the profit they had earned.

We are moving into our later years and so from time to time have tried to downsize our belongings. Lo and behold when I opened my old tie tack box I found five 2 dollar bills, our original ten "talents." Thus the sermon inspired me to write this letter.

Verse 25 - And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. Verse 26 - His Lord answered and said unto Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: (King James version)

Enclosed you will find \$40.00 that is returned to ease my conscience. This is based on my calculation of 2% cost of living increase and 5% average investment earnings on the original 10 talents.

Ginger and I wish you and your congregation well during this difficult time with the pandemic. I know there are a few members we knew that are still there. You may share this letter with your congregation. It may even inspire a sermon. If not, maybe a little humor.

Sincerely, your wicked and slothful servant - Ivan (and Ginger) Wilkinson



Trinity Presbyterian Program Financial Summary	Thru month of			Nov-20
	Month Actual	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Total Program Donations	\$10,290.42	\$204,208.08	\$201,237.90	\$219,532.26
Total Program Expenditures	\$13,039.84	\$164,601.54	\$210,187.13	\$229,737.73
Donations Less Expenses	(\$2,749.42)	\$39,606.54	(\$8,949.23)	(\$10,205.47)
Checking Roll Forward Add	\$833.37	\$9,167.07	\$9,166.67	\$10,000.00
Income Less Expenses	(\$1,916.05)	\$48,773.61	\$217.44	(\$205.47)
Mortgage Fund Donations	\$2,123.58	\$51,000.37		
Mortgage Expense	\$6,269.32	\$68,962.52		
Mortgage Balance	\$261,971.48			

Can I donate to Trinity Presbyterian Church from my IRA and get tax advantages?

Donations to Trinity Presbyterian Church are tax deductible like gifts to many or most non-profit organizations. However, changes to the tax laws a couple of years ago increased the standard deduction amounts (and eliminated the personal exemption amounts) to the point that for many (or perhaps most) taxpayers total itemized deductions are now less than the standard deduction.

Many of us who are retired depend on using a portion of our savings in Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) to use for living expenses including donations to the church and other non-profits. Those owners of IRAs who are age 72 or greater have a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) that must be taken from your IRA as taxable income, even if you don't need those funds.

For those who are at least 70½ the tax laws provide a way to make your charitable donations from your IRA without having those funds become taxable income. This is called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian, payable to a qualified charity, such as Trinity Presbyterian Church. QCDs can be counted toward your RMD for the year, as long as certain rules are met. In addition to the benefits of giving to charity, a QCD excludes the amount donated from taxable income, which is unlike regular withdrawals from an IRA. This can keep your taxable income lower and therefore lower the income tax owed. Also, QCDs don't require that you itemize which means you can still use the higher standard deduction under the current tax law. This is part of the tax code that doesn't seem to get much publicity.

If you would like to take advantage of this or to get more information as to how it might lower your taxes, please contact your IRA custodian. Ask them about how a Qualified Charitable Distribution may help you.

Your Generosity & Finance Committee - Lee Houck, Chair, John Griffiths, Jay Wilkinson, Dan Freeman (Treasurer), and Stephanie Hoekstra (Financial Secretary)

As a reminder, if you have not yet done so, please submit your **2021** giving plan. Trinity thanks you for your stewardship.

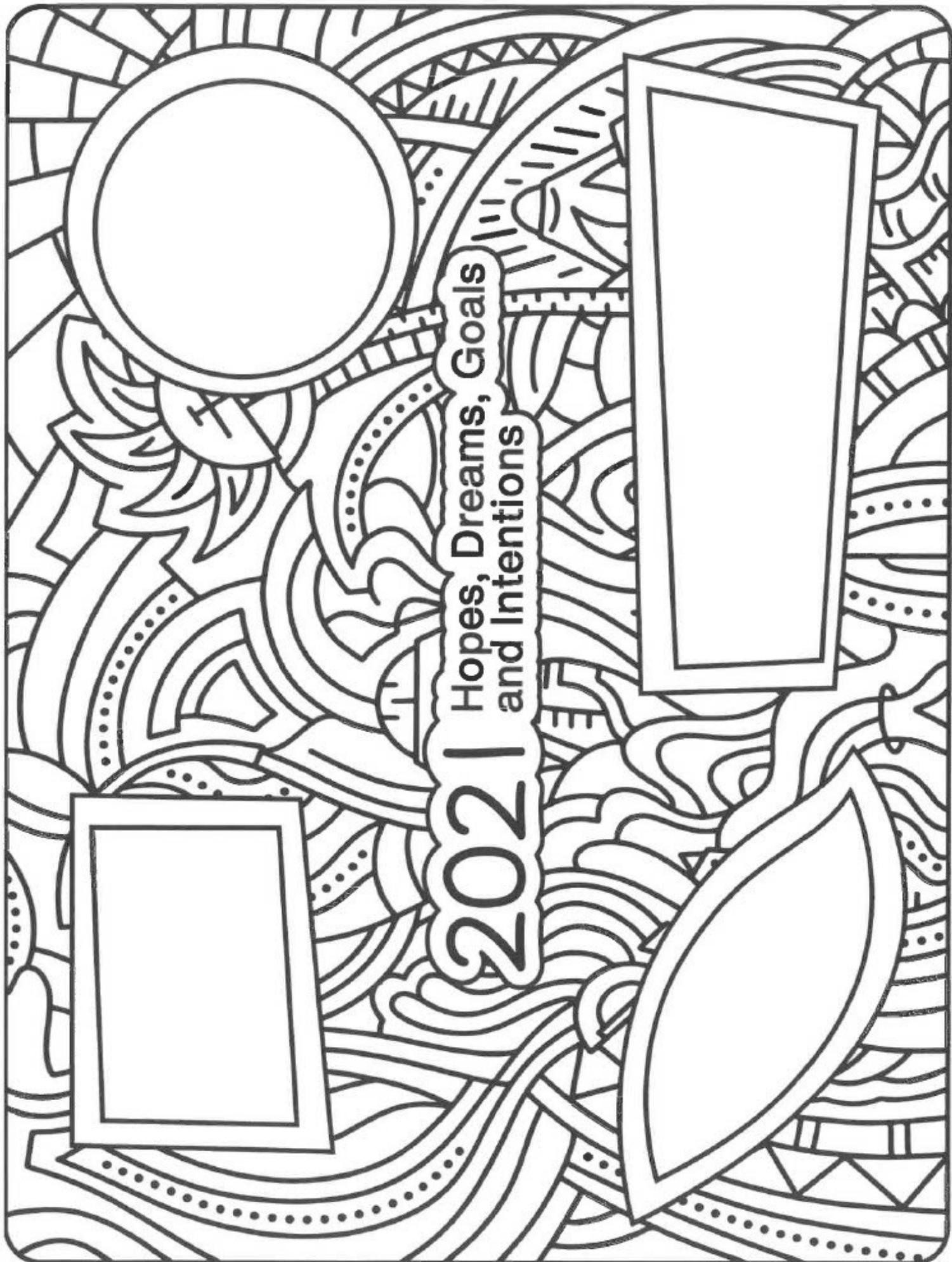


*Generosity &
Finance
Committee*

Text Your Donation!

Try **VANCO!** It's easy to give. Simply text your gift amount to 855-481-8171 and then follow the instructions on your phone to complete your donation.





2021 | Hopes, Dreams, Goals
and Intentions

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December 2020 update from the Mission and Action Committee

One of the focuses for the Mission Committee has been to provide needed items to South Washington County School District kids who are homeless or near homeless. As many of you know, Trinity has contributed the last 3 winters to the district's Winter Clothing Drive for identified children. These children range in ages from preschool through high school.

These same children have been receiving meals from the school district during the school year as well as when school is not in session. Because of the pandemic the local agencies who have supported the school's food program have not been able to keep up with the demand.

Every Meal in Roseville, formerly The Sheridan Story, has been assisting with the need for food in this community. They rely on fundraising and donations from businesses, churches, private individuals etc. Because the organization is able to buy food at less than wholesale, they are able to stretch the food dollar.

The Mission Committee has budgeted money for programs like this and recommended that **Every Meal** be a recipient for these dollars. We have contributed \$2000 for meals. Every Meal is able to provide a bag of food for \$3.40 that will serve 4 people. This means that Trinity's contribution of \$2000.00 will provide meals for a total of 2,353 food insecure individuals in South Washington County District 833 (cost per meal : 85 cents). The Mission Committee was very pleased that our donations will help the food insecure members of our community. *Kathie Wilkinson, Mission & Action Committee*



EMILIA EFFIOM

BILL SKINNER

CAROL BOURQUIN

SCOTT VANDERVEER

JIM CZEPA

DON BRECKLE

DORISE KUMCHO



JANE WILLIAMS

GINNY CARLSON

GLENN ROELOFS

HELLEN BOAYLA

JOHN JAROS

SAM FRIESEMA

JUDY HOUCK



Tuesdays
2:00 pm

Tuesdays @ 2 :00- ZOOM Bible study.

Details: Gather via Zoom from 2:00 to 3:00 pm
Contact Pastor April with questions.



Wednesdays
12:00 pm
Prayer-Full Pause

Details: 10 minutes of prayer-full pause on Trinity's Facebook page through FACEBOOK LIVE. The prayer-full pause will also be saved on Trinity's FB page and posted on Trinity's website.

SERVANT KEEPER
Notify



TRINITY TEXT ALERTS

Trinity Presbyterian is now using Mobile Phone Test Alerts! Servant Keeper Notify is a Rapid Alert & Communication System built for Churches and its various groups. Through it, Trinity has the ability to send out alerts/messages with rapid speed! If interested, please contact the church office. Only one text per month maximum.



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

*Thank
You*

Dear Friends,

We are people of faith, not of fear. And in this Christmas season and all seasons, it is not fear that motivates us: but rather, the story of how God, once long ago, visited us; choosing to cloak God's infinite power in weakness and vulnerability; placing holiness in human form, coming among us as the least of the least. In this story, we who seek the Child do not turn away, we make room at the Inn, we listen to the angels' words: *do not be afraid*.

Your gift of \$1000 on 11/23/2020 to DR000165 Disaster Relief--U.S. Wildfires extends welcome to those who have been crushed by disaster or the ravages of violence. Your generosity offers balm to those who weep as their lives are upended by catastrophe. Your attention to the forgotten ones makes room at the inn for those who have lost shelter or fled in fear of their lives. Once, long ago, the angel visited ordinary people with hope and a vision of a future where God's care and compassion would bring peace to all people. We thank you for being a tangible expression of the angel's blessing, laying your treasure before those vulnerable ones through whose eyes the Child Christ now looks upon our hurting, yet hopeful world.

With peace,

Laurie A. Kraus

The Rev. Dr. Laurie A Kraus

Director, Presbyterian disaster Assistance

A letter from the Koballs...



Friends, light has shown brightly this past year in Peru and among our partners. We have seen it in the twenty community kitchens they have organized for families that struggle to put food on the table. We have seen it in the public health workshops they have orchestrated to ensure people are following the best sanitary practices to avoid spreading the coronavirus. We have seen it in their creative sharing of resources and curriculums for school children with no access to online education. We have seen it in the continued advocacy they have done to fight for the rights of the poor, the marginalized and of the Earth itself. We have seen it in the virtual gatherings for prayer and worship that they have led to nurture their faith in a loving God. We have seen it in their simple presence with one another – their comfort in times of mourning; their laughter when the tears run dry; their steadfastness in the burdens of each day. The darkness has not overcome the light of life in Peru.

By way of you, we also know that the darkness has not overcome the light of life in the United States, either. Your generosity continues to humble us. Your graciousness continues to sustain us. But above all, your conviction to share Good News in the face of so much that is bad continues to inspire us. We are grateful to not only be your partners in mission but your sister and brother in Christ. And, in these long dark days of Advent, we wait alongside you with great expectation of the One who will break into our lives and make us sing with unfettered Joy to the world.

With gratitude, hope and Christmas longing, *Jed and Jenny Koball*