

Trinity Topics



*We are a
compassionate
and
affirming
community
that nurtures
and
celebrates
spiritual
growth.*



I'm Glad We Met Bill

By Rev. Dr. Wayne Menard

It was 1987, and I was sitting in my office in my very first congregation. Everything felt new—every conversation, every conflict, every small success. Like many young ministers, I was eager—perhaps a little too eager—to see God's hand in everything. Surely God was present in my ministry. Surely God was orchestrating things. Surely I could be counted on to notice.

It was a Friday at noon, and as was our custom, the community animator, Diane, and I were heading out for lunch. It was our weekly rhythm—a time to catch up and think ahead. I had my keys and was about to lock up when she remembered the sign. She placed it in the window: “Back at 1 o'clock.”

Lunch was good—unhurried, full of conversation. On the way back, I ducked into a convenience store to pick up something I had promised my son. Nothing remarkable. Just one of those small, ordinary detours that make up a life. As we approached the side entrance to the church—the door where the sign had been placed—we noticed a man walking toward us. Slowly. Deliberately. When he reached us, he looked at me, then at Diane, then back again, and asked, “Are you the minister here?” I said that I was, and we introduced ourselves. His name was Bill. He told us he was looking for hope. He said he had lost everything. We invited him in. Put on some coffee. Sat together.

The following week, Bill and I had time to talk alone. And he told me something I have never forgotten. He said that trying our church door had been his last attempt. If no one had been there, if the door had remained closed, he had already decided he would end his life. I remember the weight of that moment. And I remember, almost immediately, replaying the previous Friday in my mind: What if we had stayed five minutes longer at the restaurant? What if I had lingered in the store? What if something had delayed us? We would have missed him. Our paths would not have crossed.

At a presbytery meeting the next week, I shared the story with a group of colleagues. Without exception, they responded the

continued on page 2

same way: how wonderful it was that God had arranged everything, that God had brought Bill and us together at precisely the right moment. Wasn't it amazing, they said, how God works?

And I understand that instinct. I really do. There is something deeply comforting about believing that every moment is carefully arranged, that every crossing of paths is planned, that nothing is left to chance.

But over time, that explanation began to trouble me. Because if God arranged for us to be there at just the right moment...what does that say about all the moments when no one is there? About all the doors that remain closed? About all the people who do not find someone waiting on the other side?

I cannot believe in a God who saves one person by orchestrating perfect timing, while allowing another to slip through unseen because the timing was just slightly off. That kind of God begins to look less like love, and more like control. Less like grace, and more like a cosmic puppeteer—pulling strings, deciding outcomes, arranging lives with a precision that leaves very little room for human freedom, responsibility, or even randomness. And that is not the God I have come to know. I no longer believe that God planned that moment down to the minute.

I don't believe God delayed us or hurried Bill along or ensured that our paths would intersect at exactly the right second. I think, quite simply, that we got lucky. Or perhaps better said—we were available when luck brought us together. And that changes everything.

Because if it was not God manipulating the moment, then it means something else was at work. It means that what mattered was not divine control, but human presence. It means that what saved Bill in that moment was not a carefully orchestrated miracle, but the simple fact that when he reached out, there were people there to receive him. Not because God arranged it. But because we are called to be there for one another. Perhaps that is how God works—not by controlling every detail, but by entrusting the world to us. By placing us in one another's lives, not as puppets, but as companions. As caregivers. As people capable of showing up. The miracle, then, is not that God made sure we met Bill. The miracle is that when our paths happened to cross, we chose to open the door. And maybe that is where God truly lives—not in the manipulation of events, but in the quiet, courageous ways we care for one another when life, in all its randomness, brings us face to face.

Wayne

Congregational Meeting

to review the Community of Faith Profile
as we prepare to call a new minister.

Sunday, May 10, 2026

immediately after the service celebration.



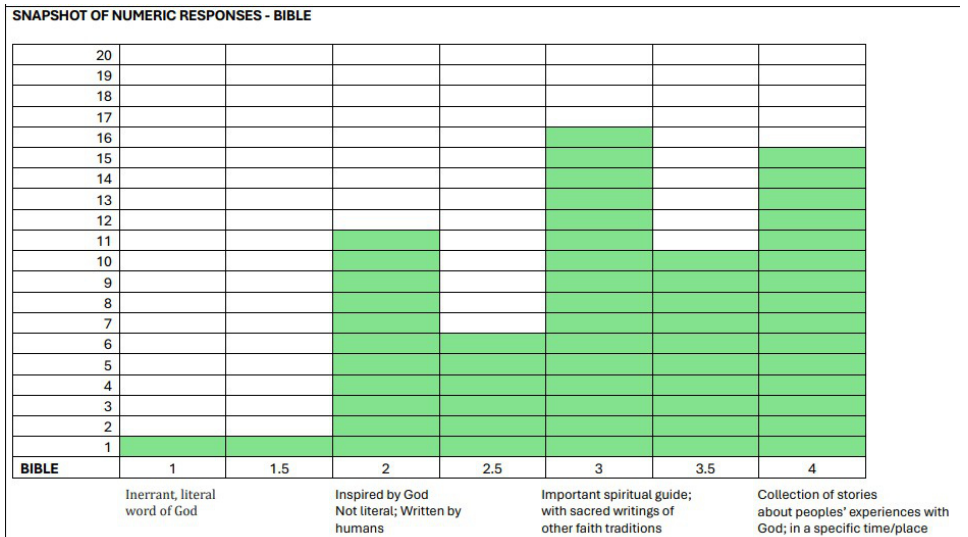
A Snapshot

These are our [survey results](#) from 2024. How would you answer these questions today? How is your answer different from 10, 20, 30 years ago? How is your faith evolving?

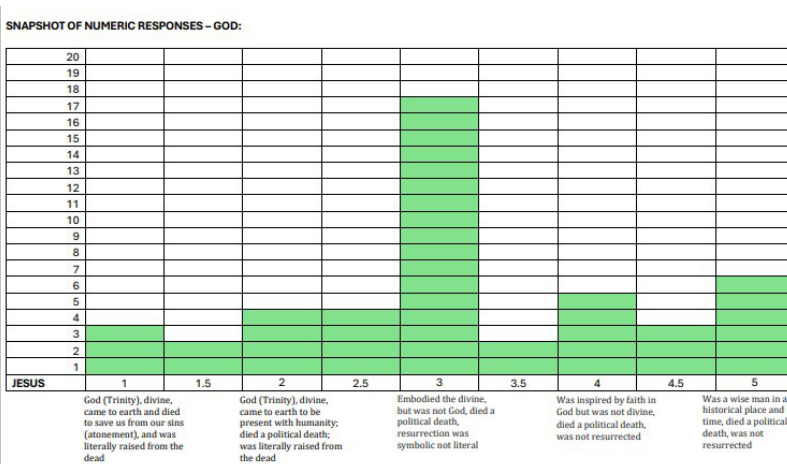


How do we think of God?

How do we view the Bible?



What do we believe about Jesus?



Worship Corner

By Rosemary Gibb and John Comfort

The Worship Committee was pleased to bring together two moving Easter services.

Good Friday arrived, as it often does, shrouded in rain and cold. Fittingly, the choir had worked hard to learn and present the haunting anthem “Cold, Cold Day.” Wayne led us through the crucifixion story. It was very powerful, as was his prayer reminding us not to fall prey to the darkness that can easily engulf us these days—but also not to ignore it. Rather we need to believe in, and work toward, brighter days ahead.

And suddenly it was Easter Sunday, with sunshine and warmer temperatures. Thanks to the efforts of Sheila Meggs, the Sanctuary was adorned with tulips and daffodils. People were

smiling and greeting family members we had not seen for a while. There were 128 people at that service, and Correna was delighted to have 14 children come down for Sunday school. (She said they were very well behaved.)

Conducted by Jackie Hawley, the choir presented an Easter Cantata, put together with individual pieces of music chosen by Donna Hawkes.

We were also blessed with Paula Conlon's exquisite flute music, which blended so well with Donna's piano and organ accompaniments.

Happy spring to all!

Photos from the alternative service in March.

Thanks to all those who worked so hard to make it a success.

Blessed by the cooks and the dishwashers!



Trinity Jubilee Foundation



By Liz Harper



Celebrating 25 years!



Strong support from the congregation and friends of the foundation has led to this milestone year. Guided by the principle, “Improving health, education and self-sufficiency in the world,” TJF has made 77 funding awards totaling more than \$360,000 over the last 25 years.

As part of this milestone year, Bev Carrick (Embrace International) joined us for a brief update on February 22. The formal campaign began on April 19 and ran for three weeks. On April 26, Pam Sheehan, one of the original members of TJF, spoke on “TJF: 25 Years and Beyond.”

Thank you again for your generous support in the past and your consideration this year allowing us to continue this worthwhile work, in Canada and beyond.



Bev, Rosemary, Liz, and Isabella after the February 22 service.

Plan to attend our
“Plant and Bake Sale”
May 9, 2026
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



The Tireless Property Committee



A year ago, this is what the Carson Room looked like.



This is what it looks like now. What a lot of work!
Thank you to our tireless property committee.



Kindness in Action

By Sheila Meggs

As a teenager in the 1960s, I lived in a world full of hope and optimism. The Second World War had ended and the Mom and Dad era of worshipping consumerism had given way to the hippie era of freedom and personal expression. Second-wave feminism was beginning, with birth control legalized and the glass ceiling beginning to crack. Jobs were plentiful and a family could buy a house, live well on one income, and afford steak on the barbecue if they so desired. The old rules of the past were slowly giving way to the individualism of the present.

I could never have envisioned the world that I, in my late 70s, live in now. The number of clients needing food banks just to survive is growing exponentially. Young people cannot afford rent, let alone find jobs. The rate of homelessness is rising. On a world-wide level, we see money and power being used to control individual thought. Leaders rule like kings with no consequences for their abuse of their citizens. The world is divided into those who have too much and those who are just trying to survive.

So I think to myself, what hope can I find? I have no political power, no extensive wealth nor a magic wand to make things right again. I have power only over myself. Then I think of the Japanese proverb, particularly appropriate to Ottawa:

One kind word can warm
three winter months.

In the Bible, Jesus showed kindness—healing the leper and the bleeding woman, feeding people, welcoming outcasts. He did not discriminate; he simply showed kindness. His was a kindness in action rather than just feeling

I have come to the conclusion that I can be Christ in the world by showing love through little acts of kindness. I can listen to my teenage friend as she pours out her problems, I can smile at everyone I meet, and I can donate to the food bank. I can knit scubbies to be sold at the May sale held by the Trinity Jubilee Foundation, I can plants herbs to share with my neighbours, and I can welcome people to knitting club, which has become a safe space to share worries and joys.

But I also need to accept kindness from others graciously: the young couple walking by who offer to carry in a heavy package for me, the friend who offers a drive after darkness, and the friend who patiently listens to me as I vent about the challenges of getting older.

I will end this brief reflection by challenging you to watch on YouTube [“We Are the World,”](#) a powerful music video produced in 1985 to encourage people to assist Africa.

*We are all part of God's great big family
And the truth you know is all we need.*

—from “We Are the World”

Lyrics by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie



Homeless at the Mall

By Gloria Sorge

Having just left the visitation for a dear friend, I went to the mall to be alone amongst the madding crowd, to nurse my soul over a cup of coffee. I had been touched beyond what I had expected at the loss of this friend. I sat for a long while, my mind empty of purposeful thoughts.

As I was gathering my things to go, I noticed a young man at the table next to me. He was hunched over his table, somewhat desperately picking and eating from several small clear plastic bags for what looked like morsels of candy. Something kept me from walking away. I approached him, and as I handed him a five dollar bill, I asked if he were hungry. He said, "Yes," and thanked me.

Still, something held me there, so I asked if he would like me to get him a hamburger. Again he said, "Yes." Then I thought that maybe he needed more than just a hamburger so I said, "Walk with me."

As we walked towards the food court, he said he was staying at a shelter at night and that, at age thirty-two, he was trying to get his life together. When we arrived at the food court, I encouraged him to order whatever he wanted, and although hesitant, he did. I paid and wished him well then I turned and walked away. Later, I thought that maybe I should have sat with him, however, it was probably best that I left him to eat in peace.

When I thought of the experience, I realized that sometimes in unexpected ways, things will happen that take us out of ourselves, and my heart ached for him.

(Carlingwood Mall, March 2, 2025)

WALK WITH ME

By Gloria Sorge

Walk with me

Walk with me through fields of green

Where all the flowers can be seen

Walk with me.

Walk with me

Walk with me on city's ground

Where all the homeless can be found

Walk with me

Walk with me

Walk with me, on this land

To the hungry near at hand

Walk with me

Walk with me

Walk with me and give a care

So what we have we may share

Walk with me



Carlington

By Jean Meldrum

The **Carlington Community Centre** is a part of the Caldwell neighbourhood. They strive to alleviate loneliness and foster a sense of belonging for everyone. They are people of hope—their hope is to help build a happy, healthy and connected community where all neighbours feel supported and valued. This season, they are launching programs designed to bring them all closer.

- Drop-in sessions offer a welcoming space to relax, meet new friends, and access resources.
- At a revitalized **Creative Connection Studio** (through their Creative Path program) people can explore their artistic side, learn new skills, or just enjoy some company while they create.
- Other new programs include a sewing time, a youth drop-in, a moms & tots group, and bi-monthly health and wellness seminars.
- Their chaplain is available throughout the season to offer ongoing support, a listening ear, and guidance.

You Can Support these Programs!

On Saturday, May 23, 2026, Carlington Community Connection will be part of the Desjardins Charity Challenge during the Tamarack Ottawa Race Weekend.

The goal is to raise \$10,000 to fund essential programs.

To learn more contact programcoordinator@carlingtonchaplancy.com

A colorful poster for 'Summer Fun for Kids' with a sun, flowers, and a list of items being accepted for donation. The background is light pink with illustrations of a smiling sun, yellow and pink flowers, and green leaves. The text is in bold, sans-serif fonts.

Summer Fun for Kids

TRINITY OUTREACH IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING:

- Child Size: sport socks, t-shirts, sun hats, sun glasses
- Outdoor play items: soccer balls, footballs, skipping ropes, beach sand pails and shovels, bubbles, sidewalk chalk
- Reusable water bottles, healthy snacks such as granola bars, juice boxes
- Arts and crafts supplies: colouring books, markers, pencils
- Supplies: sunscreen, insect repellent, hygiene items such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes

HELPING KIDS AT CALDWELL FAMILY CENTRE!

Stained Glass Update

By Chris Humphrey

The first stained glass panel is mounted in its frame, and the second one is in the build phase and coming along well.

In 2013, we had full use of the lower kitchen—these days the church is a busier place, and we only have access to half of one kitchen for limited times. The fact that we have fewer volunteers than 13 years ago, actually works well with those limitations.

We still have concerns about the back-lighting. The LED manufacturers have changed their products since 2013, and what is available now is not suitable to light the “windows.” But we’re working on it.



When you meet someone new in church, remember these welcome cards.

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH
1099 MAITLAND AVENUE
OTTAWA, ON K2C 2B8
613-225-3627
office@trinityunitedottawa.ca

Welcome!

First, welcome and thank you for joining us at Trinity United today. We're glad you are here.

If you're interested in learning more about Trinity or connecting to our church community, please fill out this card and hand it to a volunteer or drop it into the offering plate. Alternatively, scan the code to complete the form online.

We look forward to seeing you again!



Scan this code to complete the form online.

Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____
Address _____

My preferred communication method is:

Email Phone Call Text Message Regular Mail

I want to learn more about the following:

Family and Children's Ministries Social justice and Outreach
 Bible Studies and Small Groups Community Groups (Knitting Club, Men's Breakfast group, etc.)
 Music and Worship

COMMUNITY CONNECTION CARD



Articles and photos are gratefully accepted.
The editors reserve the right to edit all material.

Deadline for next edition:

Sunday, September 13, 2026

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