

# TIDINGS

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JUNE 2020

VOL. 54 NO. 6

## HEY E-NEIGHBOR

### COME BE A PART OF OUR E-NEIGHBORHOOD!

[TRINITYBIRMINGHAM.COM/ENEIGHBORHOOD](http://TRINITYBIRMINGHAM.COM/ENEIGHBORHOOD)

Join us online throughout the week for e-programming during this time of social distancing. On this E-NEIGHBORHOOD page on the church website, there is an extensive list of some new ways that Trinity can stay connected as a church. Check it out - and plug in!

NOTE: All Trinity Facebook pages are publicly shared & can be accessed without a Facebook account.



## WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

**While our buildings and offices remain closed, Trinity is still here for you.**  
If you need to contact the church, please do so by calling 205.879.1737 or by emailing [trinity@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:trinity@trinitybirmingham.com).

Our pastors are also available for you and may be reached by either the Care Line #: 205-868-9709 or by the PASTOR on call #: 205-538-3682.

[WWW.TRINITYBIRMINGHAM.COM/HEALTHANDSAFETY](http://WWW.TRINITYBIRMINGHAM.COM/HEALTHANDSAFETY)

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

# LITTLE BUGS BIG IMPACT

BIG AND SMALL  GOD USES US ALL 



### JULY 13 REGISTER TODAY!

KIDS! It has been bugging us that we've been apart for the last few months. So we've joined up with other churches to put on the BIGGEST, BUGGIEST, VBS that has ever been!

VBS is going online so that you will not miss out on singing, laughing, playing and spending time with God this summer.

Follow this link to register:

[TRINITYBIRMINGHAM.COM/KIDS/TRINITYKIDS-SUMMER-PROGRAMS-3](http://TRINITYBIRMINGHAM.COM/KIDS/TRINITYKIDS-SUMMER-PROGRAMS-3)

Questions? Contact Eleanor at [echristiansen@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:echristiansen@trinitybirmingham.com)

## A NOTE FROM PASTOR BRIAN

(Reprint: Letter to Congregation, May 23, 2020)

To My Trinity Brothers and Sisters:

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Risen Lord! I have been working on a video message to send out to all of you, but I've received a few calls that made this feel a little more urgent.

I am grateful that President Trump has deemed churches "essential" during this crisis and, while I know I am biased, I agree. The work of proclaiming our hope in Jesus has never been more important, and I am so thankful for all the ways that Trinity is living out the gospel both in word and deed over these last several weeks. Whether it's feeding our hungry neighbors, hosting the largest blood drive in our community since the outbreak began, or covering utilities for families that have been unable to work, you all have been salt and light to a broken world.

The fact is, even though our building hasn't been open, the church has never closed, nor have we hesitated in fulfilling our God-given mission. In our daily Bible Study this week (join us on Facebook if you've been missing it), we read those powerful words from Jesus' trial, where his accusers claim he threatened to tear down the Jerusalem Temple, only to rebuild it in three days. It's the most legitimate charge they make against him, because in some ways, that is exactly what he does. He establishes a church that can never be confined to a physical address, because every heart is a temple for God's Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16).

I am so thankful for the many medical professionals we have in the church, several of whom have been kind enough over these last few weeks to give feedback and advice about the potential effects of returning to our regular worship schedule. We also have an incredibly wise team of lay leaders, who have been of immeasurable worth as we have navigated this new normal. We have also received over 500 responses to our survey, which has been tremendously helpful to our team in sorting through how the church as a whole is feeling about returning to the building. After much prayer and deliberation, I want to explain to you why Trinity is not ready to re-open our building for in-person worship.

1) Some of the most significant risks associated with COVID-19 are heightened in a worship environment. Singing (an important part of our worship experiences) can be as dangerous as coughing, and there is uncertainty as to whether or not congregational singing of any kind is safe. The duration of our worship services also increases the chance of one sick (or asymptomatic) person spreading the disease. In Texas, a Catholic priest at Holy Ghost Catholic Parish has died from the virus after reopening for worship, and Catoosa Baptist in Georgia had to shut down all over again when several of their families came down with COVID-19, even though they had followed all the necessary precautions. Being in the church building together for a full worship service potentially poses more chances for infection than going to the store, or eating at your favorite restaurant.



Rev. Brian Erickson  
SENIOR PASTOR

berickson@trinitybirmingham.com  
205.879.1737

2) Were we to come back immediately, the necessary precautions we take would dramatically effect the worship experience. We could not sing together, we could not shake hands, use hymnals or bulletins, celebrate communion, and we would have to be spread out from one another in our worship spaces. There will be bathroom monitors, someone counting heads at the door, and everyone would be asked to wear a mask. There would also be no childcare or Sunday School meetings. In order to observe social distancing, the capacity of our spaces would be greatly diminished. This makes me question the rush to get back into the building, given that the quality of what we will come back to will be so different from what we left back in March. While our online experience lacks the power of in-person worship, the in-person experience available to us at this point is similarly lacking, while putting our most vulnerable members and guests at risk. Which brings me to the most important consideration in my mind...

3) Our most vulnerable members will be among the first back in the door. I know for a fact that several of our members who are the most anxious to be back in the building are likewise some of the persons who are most at-risk for the worst effects of the coronavirus. When the church is open for worship, no matter how many times we ask people to be cautious, some will interpret our opening as a sign that faithfulness requires being physically present. While I long for us to be in worship together again, and I know many of you are frustrated that we have not opened back up yet, the risks of being wrong and opening up too soon are far more serious than erring on the side of caution.

Given the current situation, we will not open for in-person worship until at least July, and perhaps even later. While other churches in our area will begin opening up in the next few weeks, we will continue to monitor the data and prepare ourselves for the logistical challenges of being back in the facility together. Also, we have begun small group guided tours through the building (by appointment), as a way of keeping members connected to the space, while also ensuring safety. Our leadership team will continue to seek advice from our medical professionals, monitor the situation closely, and give you timely updates as to what's next.

In the meantime, I covet your prayers and your patience. This is the most difficult season of ministry I have ever experienced, and I am so thankful to have such a supportive church family to walk through it with. I take comfort knowing that the church of Christ has endured just about everything the world could throw at it in the last two thousand years, and still she stands. And Trinity will emerge from this trial stronger and more alive than ever, even though church will likely look very different on the other side of this pandemic.

You all are in my prayers, and I am grateful to be your pastor.

In Christ,

Brian 

## WORSHIP ONLINE

Join us for ONLINE worship services  
on Sundays at 8:30 & 11 AM.



Services are live-streamed on the Trinity  
Facebook page located at:  
[www.facebook.com/trinityumcbirmingham](http://www.facebook.com/trinityumcbirmingham)  
Click on the Videos tab. (Facebook account not required)



Services may also be found on the Trinity  
YouTube channel located at:  
[www.youtube.com/trinityumcbirmingham](http://www.youtube.com/trinityumcbirmingham)

Note: All services are archived on both  
Facebook and YouTube – allowing you to  
watch at any time that is convenient.

### RADIO BROADCAST

Another Sunday worship option is through our radio  
broadcast. Our service airs weekly on Sunday morning  
beginning at 9 AM on stations 1070AM and 99.5FM.  
We hope you will tune in and worship with us.

#### Let us know you are in attendance!

Whether worshipping via radio or live stream, please  
remember to use the online attendance & giving form  
found at: <http://bit.ly/1400attendance>

## Wednesday Night Meals to Go!

Chef Bert and staff are here to help make dinner easier  
for you this month. Place your orders for any of the dates  
listed below by Tuesday at 6 PM and pickup at Trinity on  
Wednesday between 4–6 PM.

(Electronic payment available, checks accepted, no cash)

Please make your order as either  
Feeds 2 - \$15 / Feeds 4-6 - \$30

#### Menu June 10:

Grilled Greek Chicken Boneless Breasts, Rice Pilaf, Greek  
Salad and Dressings, Pita Bread, Cookies

#### Menu June 17:

Grilled or Fried Chicken Tenders, Macaroni and Cheese,  
Garden Salad and Dressings, Rolls, Cookies

#### Menu June 25:

Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Garden Salad and Dressings,  
Rolls, Cookies

*Order online:*

[www.trinitybirmingham.com](http://www.trinitybirmingham.com)

Questions? Email [hospitality@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:hospitality@trinitybirmingham.com).

*join us!*

June 7

WELCOME AND MEET

June 14

BELIEVE AND BELONG

10 AM each Sunday

If you are new to Trinity or would like  
more information about our church,  
please join us for these informative  
Zoom sessions. For ZOOM link,  
please email Julie Wright at  
[jwright@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:jwright@trinitybirmingham.com).

 NEXT  
STEPS

## PACESETTERS

JUNE MEETING ON ZOOM

12:00 PM

Tuesday, June 16

BIG NEWS! This month, Pacesetters will resume by meet-  
ing for lunch via ZOOM. Our guest speaker will be Niki  
Sepsas and the timely topic will be:

***“The Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918-1919: A Century  
Later, What Have We Learned?”***

What was called the “Spanish Flu” claimed an estimated  
60 to 100 million lives in a short 15-month period as it  
raged around the world in 1918 and 1919. Today, another  
virus has created a pandemic that has resulted in entire  
countries in lockdown. This presentation chronicles what  
life was like for the people who lived through those terrible  
times a century ago and compares it to the economic and  
social ramifications of the COVID-19 virus today.

– Please contact Julie Wright for instructions and the  
Zoom link by emailing her at  
[jwright@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:jwright@trinitybirmingham.com).

# MISSIONS & OUTREACH

## Backpack Ministry

Trinity wrapped up our 5th school year serving food insecure children through the Backpack Ministry. Your generosity of time and gifts has resulted in over 48,000 weekend meal bags getting into the hands of students in need in our community!

### Concerned about food insecure children this summer?

We are too! We are now distributing bags of easy to prepare/ready to eat food to households with school age children at our Food Share. You can help by donating food, assembling, or distributing the food bags on Tuesdays. Please drop off any of the below items at the Trinity West Homewood Fellowship Hall from 11:30 am-12:30 pm on Tuesdays. Single serve oatmeal, grits, dry cereal, mac & cheese packets, crackers, cookies, applesauce, pudding cups, and cans of Chef Boyardee and hearty soups. Want to volunteer? Reach out to Liza Spencer at [lspencer@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:lspencer@trinitybirmingham.com).

## Expanded Hours at the Food Share

In response to increased need, we are now operating our drive through food pantry at Trinity West Homewood from 1:30-4:00 pm every Tuesday. Volunteers are needed to help with food distribution during this time, and assembling food boxes from 11:30 am-1:00 pm. Sign up online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0a49a9aa28a5fd0-food1>

## Children's Clothing Closet Summer Needs

We are in need of like new, summer clothing and shoes for children and teens. Drop off items at Trinity West Homewood on Tuesdays from 11:30 am-12:30 pm. Please do not donate clothing that is for adults, the winter, or stained/ripped.

## American Red Cross Blood Drive

Save the date! July 23 - Trinity Oxmoor Gym

At our recent drive on May 5 we collected enough blood to save 228 lives! We are hosting another blood drive on Thursday, July 23 from 9:30 am-2:30 pm. Appointments are available and walk ups welcome. For an appointment, call 1-800-733-2767 or visit [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) and enter sponsor code: TUMCHWD

## Questions about Mission and Outreach?

Contact Kristan Walker, Director, at 205-879-1737 or [kwalker@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:kwalker@trinitybirmingham.com).



Food Share volunteers boxing food and items for distribution on Tuesdays.



## Buying and Selling a home during a pandemic Wednesday, JUNE 17, 5:30 PM

Trinity Gifts Academy will host a Zoom session with experts Stacy Flippen, Barbara Wheeler and Daniel Sims at 5:30 pm on June 17. If you are in the market for a new home, or looking to buy a new house during this time - join us to ask questions and gain advice on the current market.

FOR THE ZOOM LINK, please email Julie Wright at [jwright@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:jwright@trinitybirmingham.com).

# YOUTH JUNE EVENTS

## CHURCH-WIDE WORSHIP

SUNDAY at 8:30 & 11 AM on Trinity's YouTube & Facebook Page. Join us every Sunday for worship with music led by both our Sanctuary and Contact worship teams and avmessage from Senior Pastor Brian Erickson.

## VIRTUAL ELEMENT AT THE PARK

SUNDAY at 6 PM on Element's Instagram and Facebook Page. Each Sunday evening, one of our students will lead us in a short time of devotional and prayer as we begin our new week. These devotionals will be available anytime after 6 PM if your student is not able to join us live.

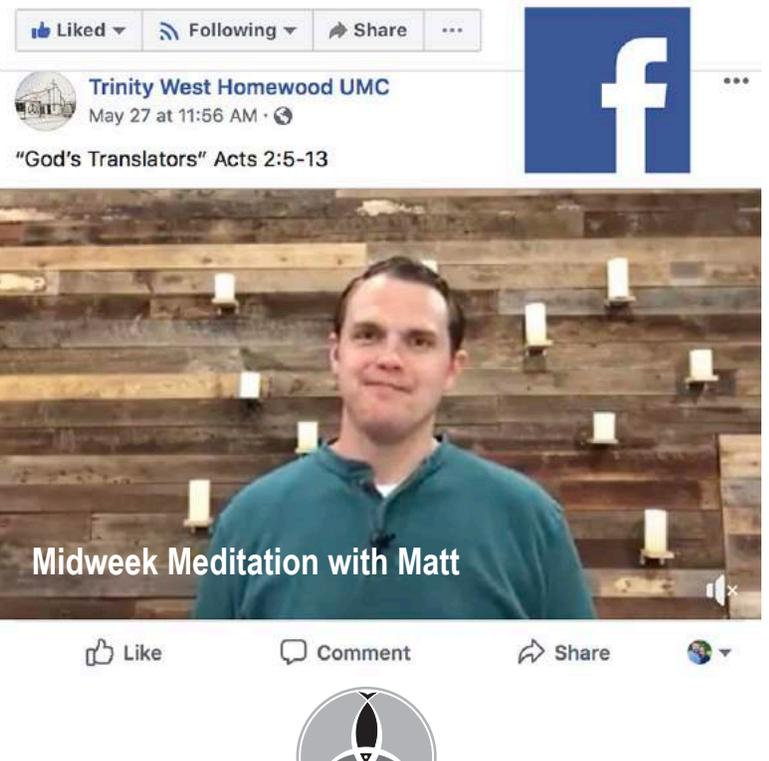
## ELEMENT GAME NIGHT

TUESDAY at 6:30 PM on Zoom (email Josh for link). Led by Josh Miller and Parker Stech, this 60 minute online gathering is for any and all students who are looking for some fun and community. Each week, Josh and Parker will lead some fun virtual games that might even pull in the whole family!

## ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN THURSDAY

THURSDAY at 10 AM on Element's Instagram and Facebook Page. Every Thursday, a student will be selected to share a special skill, hobby or craft with our ministry at large as well as a 'how to' tutorial, if need be. Our hope is that our entire community will then join in with this special challenge. These can range from cooking, practicing a second language, exercising, and more!

*\*\*Additionally, our team, along with our adult leaders, are working to create 'by-grade' groups and connection opportunities throughout the summer and will contact both students and parents to formalize these groups. For more information and to be directly looped into initial communications, please email Josh at [jmiller@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:jmiller@trinitybirmingham.com).*



## TRINITY WEST HOMEWOOD

**Midweek Meditation** - Need a mid-week pick me up? Don't miss these short devotionals on Wednesdays at Noon from Pastor Matt.  
[www.facebook.com/trinitywesthwd/](http://www.facebook.com/trinitywesthwd/)  
[www.instagram.com/trinitywesthwd/](http://www.instagram.com/trinitywesthwd/)

**One Song, One Sermon** - Join us for a brief but well-produced online Sunday service for those on-the-go, now live-streamed at 9 AM & 11AM. [www.facebook.com/trinitywesthwd/](http://www.facebook.com/trinitywesthwd/)

**Community Hour** - You are invited to a time to connect online with your TWH campus family on Sundays at 10 AM while separated by the pandemic. This takes place on Zoom, email Matt for the link.

### NEW BIBLE STUDY! Starting June 17

Waiting on the World to Change: Insights from First Thessalonians - a five-week Bible study at 7 PM on Wednesdays for anyone trying to spiritually survive in a tumultuous world. (Zoom but also live casted on Trinity West Facebook page [www.facebook.com/trinitywesthwd/](http://www.facebook.com/trinitywesthwd/) )

While the Trinity West Homewood building and office is currently closed, you can contact Matt at anytime by calling 205-879-1737 or emailing [mandrews@trinitybirmingham.com](mailto:mandrews@trinitybirmingham.com).