

# Tidings



A Monthly Publication from Trinity United Methodist Church, Tallahassee, FL

## Planting Seeds of Hope in Guatemala

by Jayne Mittan, Missions Team Leader

Team Trinity left Tallahassee on November 5, 2022. Many of our members were new to this specific mission, as well as being new to foreign missions. Some were a little hesitant, concerned about safety and travel to a third-world country. However, everyone pulled together to offer reassurance and answer questions to allay their fears.

On our arrival in Guatemala, we were met by staff from Porch de Salomon, loaded onto a bus, and driven five and a half hours from Guatemala City to Panajachel. Panajachel would serve as our home base for the week.

Panajachel is a beautiful town on the banks of Lake Atitlan, in the western highlands. It is surrounded by mostly dormant volcanoes and offers spectacular views of the countryside. October is normally the end of the rainy season, but this year it has continued into November. The rain did not stop us from doing anything during the week, but it made it a little bit messier. There were flowers in full bloom along the roads and in the fields, and everything was lush and green.

On Sunday morning we had an orientation with Greg and Rachel McGaha, the new executive directors of Porch de Salomon. After orientation, we were treated to a lovely boat ride across the lake to a hillside resort called Casa Del Mundo, or House of the World. We enjoyed a delicious and bountiful brunch of traditional Central American food and had time to relax and enjoy our surroundings after our very long

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### Memorial Gifts

#### Honorariums

In honor of **Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams** from Judith Levy.

#### Memorials

In memory of **Patricia Beall** from Mike and Dianne Ruff, Paula and Bill Smith, and Mary Margaret Rogers.

In memory of **Marilyn Williams** from Mary Margaret Rogers.





**Panajachel is a beautiful town on the banks of Lake Atitlan, in the western highlands. It is surrounded by mostly dormant volcanoes and offers spectacular views of the countryside.**

travel day on Saturday. Those of us who had been before knew that this was the last time we would have this much free time and relaxation for the week, and we really took advantage. Later that afternoon, we attended a worship gathering led by Greg McGaha, back at Hotel California in Panajachel. For dinner, we walked down to a restaurant called José Pingüinos, where we enjoyed a marimba and cultural show. Part of the show included a few contests, and I'm happy to say our very own Abigail Boyd won two out of three. We learned about some of the culture and history of the indigenous Mayan people, and why it is so important for us to continue our mission in this area.

Bright and early Monday morning we enjoyed a hearty breakfast at Café Hotel California. Retired Rev. Anne Godbold led us in a devotion about making everyone a "Whobody," not a "No-

body," and Holy Communion. Sharing in this most holy of holy sacraments helped us focus on our mission for the week and drew us closer as a team. We then split up into our construction team and our medical team and headed to two different villages for our respective jobs.

The construction team had the arduous task of beginning construction on a house for Santa Floridalma Chomajay Ixcaya and her family. Santa's husband was tragically electrocuted during a construction accident and did not survive. This family lives in abject poverty in a simple structure of wood and aluminum corrugated panels. The floor is dirt. When it rains, the water runs into the house and across the dirt/mud floor. Santa (22), her mother, Maria (52), and two children, Brayan Eduardo (4) and Lester Agustin (2), all sleep on the dirt floor. There are no beds. They have running water (cold) but no electricity. The sink and bathroom are outside. The entire site is surrounded by a corn field.

Imagine yourself living in their situation, where every day is the same. Then, out of nowhere, a group of gringos shows up. Introductions are made, pleasantries are exchanged, and timid smiles begin to appear. The seeds of hope for a new and better life are planted. Throughout the week as work continues, the work turns into fun as the family participates in the construction.

There are contests to see who can carry the most concrete blocks and tie steel the best. All under the watchful eyes and guidance of the Porch construction supervisors. Relationships are built along with the house, and the smiles continue to grow. Those smiles turn into laughter as Santa and her family exude joy at being able to share time with strangers



*"We enjoyed a delicious and bountiful brunch of traditional Central American food and had time to relax and enjoy our surroundings after our very long travel day on Saturday. Those of us who had been before knew that this was the last time we would have this much free time and relaxation for the week."*



who are showing them love through their actions. For the first time in her young life, Santa is able to let go of some of her worries and responsibilities and just have fun.

On the last day of construction, both the medical and construction teams gathered with the family. Santa and her mother were presented with prayer shawls and a prayer quilt that held the love and prayers of our entire church. The quilts will be used on the beds that will be built, and for the first time, each one will have a bed of their own. No more sleeping on the dirt. The house will be connected to electricity and consist of three bedrooms, a kitchen with a sink, an indoor bathroom, tile floor, and sheet metal roof. Simple wood furniture will be constructed to complete the furnishings. More prayers were uplifted and tears shed as we said our good-byes.

The medical team completed three days of portable clinics in different settings. In the first village, we encountered a 31-year-old woman, with three small children at home and an alcoholic, abusive husband. We saw several women having heart problems, and many with other serious ailments.

In the second village, we saw mostly women, many of whom had never had the opportunity to receive medical care. As you might imagine, they had long lists of ailments to address.

They were grateful for the time we took to listen, examine, diagnose, and treat their problems. Imagine living with something as painful as migraine headaches without any medicine or help. These are very hard-working and tough people. And seeing our all-girl team goes a very long way in bolstering their self-esteem and self-worth.

The last clinic day was a boat-ride away to see men and women participating in alcohol and drug rehabilitation through Casa Tat Loy and Casa Ixoqi. In addition to their daily battle with addiction, they have the same health problems that we do, but without any source of relief. Many self-medicate with drugs and/or alcohol. Addiction adds to those problems with things like injuries from fights, liver damage and disease, social isolation, malnutrition, exposure to the elements, and loss

of relationships, among others. Our presence with these men and women shows that no matter how bad it gets, God still loves them and that they deserve our love and respect.

**All in all, we saw over 300 patients during the week. Everyone received the medicines they needed in addition to the knowledge that we love and care for them through God's love and grace, so freely given to us all. We planted seeds of hope.**

The whole team was rather quiet on the bus ride back to the airport as we remembered the people we had served during the week. Even though we sometimes couldn't help with a specific problem, no one left without know-

ing how much they were loved.

As we reflect on this year's trip, we look forward to planning our trip for 2023. Our dates for next year are October 7-14. Please search your heart and consider joining us. There is a job for everyone, no skills required. Remember, God doesn't call those who are equipped; He equips those whom He calls. Is He calling you? Contact Jayne Mittan at [jaynemittan@gmail.com](mailto:jaynemittan@gmail.com).



***"Relationships are built along with the house, and the smiles continue to grow. Those smiles turn into laughter as Santa and her family exude joy at being able to share time with strangers who are showing them love through their actions."***



# Meet Amy Leach

## *BFC Instructor Spotlight*

"I was introduced to BFC eight years ago. We had been visiting Trinity for a few months when I noticed a blurb about the BFC exercise classes in the bulletin. I had recently transitioned from teacher to stay-at-home mom, so I was eager to find new things to do. Now, I am thrilled to still be a part of the BFC community, as both an instructor and a participant. This ministry has allowed me to get to know a variety of people at Trinity that I may have never crossed paths with otherwise. When the pandemic hit, our Variety Mix class was quick to pivot to Zoom, and it was such a blessing to have that connection every Tuesday and Thursday until we could be together in person again.

I am grateful to Beth Curry for building such a wonderful ministry and especially grateful to those who join us and make this program such a joy to be a part of. I am a huge fan of getting involved in small groups, and if you haven't found one that fits you, we would love to have you join us in class sometime!"



**Amy teaches Variety Mix on Tuesdays and Thursdays.**

### **Fall 2022 BFC & BFO Class Schedule**

Monday 9:30 a.m.	<b>Flexibility for a Better You</b> (Zoom only)
Tuesday 9:45 a.m.	<b>Staying Strong</b>
Tuesday 11:00 a.m.	<b>Variety Mix</b>
Thursday 11:00 a.m.	<b>Variety Mix</b>
Thursday 12:15 p.m.	<b>Flexibility for a Better You</b>
Thursday 1:30 p.m.	<b>Staying Strong</b>
Thursday 6:00 p.m.	<b>BFO Walking/Hiking</b> (meets at a Tally Park)

Classes meet in Moor Hall and are available on Zoom except as noted. For more information about BFC (Becoming Fit at Church) Exercise and BFO (Becoming Fit Outdoors) Walking/Hiking, please email [BFCSeries@yahoo.com](mailto:BFCSeries@yahoo.com). Advance registration is required.

The last exercise classes for 2022 will be on Tuesday, December 20. BFO will end on Thursday, December 15. Our BFC Instructors will take a much needed, once-a-year holiday break. Classes will resume on Thursday, January 5, 2023.



# Angel Tree



Each tag represents a child or young person who has shared a wish with us.

*by Pat & Lyn Bevis, Local Missions Committee Chairs*

Angels will be among us this month as we provide Christmas gifts for children in need in our community. Christmas trees with information tags will be placed in the Narthex and in the Welcome Center/Moor Hall right before Thanksgiving. They will be available for just two Sundays, November 27 and December 4. Each tag represents a child or young person who has shared a wish with us.

Please select a tag, purchase the gift, wrap it, and return it on December 11 (with the tag attached) to the altar of your worship service. The agencies have requested that gift cost be between \$25 and \$40 because multiple children from one family may be included, and they want consistency in values to avoid hard feelings. In many cases the best way to fulfill the wish is to purchase a gift card. Please try to match the specific gift or gift card requested as closely as possible so we can fulfill these dreams.

We will have a blessing of the gifts at all services on the 11th. The gifts will then be distributed through Capital City Youth Services, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Pace Center for Girls.

## Santa's Sleigh Team

*by Nancy Bedford, United Women in Faith Communications Officer*

Members of Trinity Women in Faith are reaching out to our homebound women during the Christmas season by creating and delivering a special Christmas gift.

We will meet on Thursday, December 15, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in the Trinity library to decorate "Santa's sleighs" and fill them with donations of individually wrapped gifts of baked goods, candies, teas, ornaments, etc. We welcome all donations which can be brought or dropped off on the work day. Members

will assemble the sleighs, and volunteers will deliver them to the recipients. Come and join our team for a morning of fun and friendship! If you know of a Trinity lady that we need to put on Santa's route, be sure to call or email us! For additional information, please contact President Sandy Frazier at 850-933-4656 or email [longplain917@comcast.net](mailto:longplain917@comcast.net)

Save the date February 14, 2023, for the next luncheon unit meeting.

# An Invitation into the Scriptural Story of Advent

## An Excerpt from *Abide With Us*, Trinity's Daily Advent Devotional

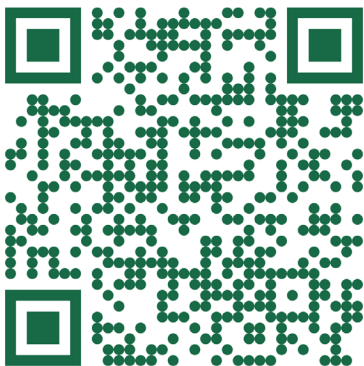
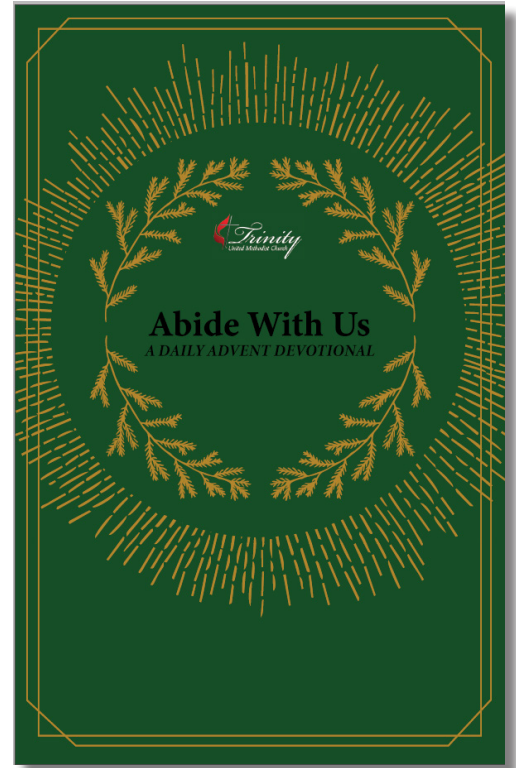
by Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams, Senior Pastor

The beginning of the liturgical calendar, which we call Advent, comes from the historic Christian celebration of the incarnation—the coming of Christ to the world. During the season of Advent, we hear the prophetic stories of the Old Testament and how the Hebrews longed for the coming of the Messiah. Advent allows us to be active in our remembrance of Israel's longing to be liberated and how in the birth of Jesus Christ that liberation came, not only to Israel, but to the entire world.

Advent, from the Latin word *adventus*, invites us to anticipate the second coming of Jesus Christ. As the prophets of old anticipating the coming of the Messiah, so we anticipate the second coming of Jesus Christ when God's Kingdom will be fulfilled. The themes and scripture readings of Advent prepare us for the second coming while commemorating the coming of Christ in the incarnation. The poet and prophet Isaiah gives us a glimpse of the peace that will come in the fulfilled Kingdom of Jesus Christ. "He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young" (Isaiah 40: 11, NRSV).

For each Sunday of Advent, we light candles to recall hope, peace, faith, and love. These are four key components of our faith. On Christmas Eve we watch as the Advent wreath shines its brightest upon lighting the Christ Candle—the candle of the incarnation. An eternal light, the light of Christ, has come and shines brightly through the darkness. The reality of our hope in Christ is that this light shines brightly in our future – it shines to remind us of the incarnation and it shines into the Advent of the second coming of Christ! Here is verse four of "Once in Royal David's City" written by C. F. Alexander in 1848:

*And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;  
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;  
And he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.*



You are invited to enter into the scriptural story during this Advent and Christmas season. By reading and meditating on these scriptures you will be able to enter into the life of the Hebrews as they long awaited their Messiah, sense the comfort of peace, and also develop an anticipation for the second coming of Jesus Christ. You will find yourself in the New Testament story of longing and find that we Christians have a lot in common with our Hebrew ancestors. We long for the Kingdom of God. This is why we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus, come."

*If you'd like to participate in a daily Advent reading with your church family, please scan the QR code and subscribe. You will receive a daily email from November 27 until Christmas Day with a Scripture passage and reflection written by a Trinity member or staff.*





# Trinity Kids Update

*by Candace Duclos, Director of Children's Ministries*

As we look to December, we will focus our hearts and studies on the true meaning of Christmas. We will hear about the prophet Isaiah of the promise given to Zechariah and Elizabeth and the journey to Bethlehem. Christmas is a wonderful time for everyone, especially kids! The NETKids will be preparing for the Gingerbread Festival, which will happen on Wednesday, December 14, at 5:30-6:15 p.m. This is a service project that will involve decorations, carnival-like games, food, and more. Be on the lookout for more details. It is an exciting time in the life of our Children's Ministry. Please plug in, encourage your children, grandchildren, and friends to check out all that we have going on!

## 3RD ANNUAL

# COOKIES WITH SANTA

Santa is visiting from the North Pole! Enjoy a cookie while you meet him, and don't forget to bring your camera!

**3:30 - 6:30 PM**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3**

**FRONT STEPS OF TRINITY  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,  
120 W. PARK AVE**

**FREE EVENT!**

HOSTED BY TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND PRESCHOOL





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## WORSHIP SERVICES

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Early Service: 8:30 a.m. in the sanctuary  
SUN Service (contemporary worship): 9:45 a.m. in Moor Hall  
Traditional Service: 11 a.m. in the sanctuary

SUN Service and 11 a.m. Service are live streamed  
Please visit [www.tumct.org](http://www.tumct.org) for viewing links

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## PASTORAL STAFF

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Rev. Dr. Matthew Williams, *Senior Pastor*  
Rev. Bryant Manning, *Interim Associate Pastor*  
Dr. Nick Quinton, *Director of Discipleship and Adult Ministries*  
Rev. Wayne Curry, *Minister of Pastoral Care*

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Laurie Atteberry, *Business Administrator*  
Ben Armstead, *Sexton*  
Viktor Billa, *Organist*  
Zachary Cramer, *Technical Director*  
Gabriela Denton, *Communications Coordinator*  
Candace Duclos, *Director of Children's Ministries*  
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Sofia Fernandez, *Director of Youth Ministry & Modern Music*

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Brett Ingram, *Facility Director*  
Amy Leach, *Programs Assistant*  
Charlotte Mathews, *Sexton*  
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## TIDINGS TEAM

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[Gabriela Denton](#), *Editor*

[Pamela C. Crosby](#), *Technical Editor*

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