

Tidings



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

ZOE Empowers: Transforming Lives through Sustainable Development

by Trinity's ZOE Empowers Team (Matthew Williams, Russ Mick, Candace Duclos, Irene Gonzalez)

In this issue, we introduce a new series, "Global Glimpses: Spotlight on Our International Missions." In the coming issues of Tidings, we will highlight and give updates on each of our mission partners across the globe, including Guatemala, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Zimbabwe.

ZOE Empowers, a non-profit organization with a mission to uplift orphaned and vulnerable children, operates under the empowering principle of helping children help themselves. Through this unique approach, ZOE Empowers enables these children to generate their own income, achieve food security, and build a sustainable future. This self-reliant model not only addresses immediate needs but also instills a sense of dignity and hope among the youth, setting the foundation for long-term prosperity.

Trinity United Methodist Church in Tallahassee is a steadfast supporter of ZOE Empowers. Through a member donor, the Children's Ministry, and the Youth Ministry, Trinity has adopted a group who has named themselves Harmony Sadziwa. We began support of the group in October 2023 and they will graduate in September 2026. This partnership underscores Trinity's dedication to global outreach and sustainable community development.

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In April 2024, a team from Trinity, including Candace Duclos, Irene Gonzalez, Russ Mick, and Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams, visited the Harmony Sadziwa Group. Their visit was a testament

to the strong bond developing between Trinity and the ZOE program, offering firsthand encouragement and witnessing the significant progress made by the orphans and vulnerable children. The team returned inspired, seeing how the children, through their hard work and the support of ZOE Empowers, were transforming their lives and building a brighter future.

THE ZOE EMPOWERMENT MODEL

ZOE Empowers operates through a comprehensive three-year empowerment program designed to tackle the multifaceted challenges faced by orphaned and vulnerable children. The program's holistic approach includes elements of food security, income generation, health and disease prevention, education, housing, and child rights awareness. Each component is tailored to ensure that by the end of the program, the children are financially, physically, emotionally, and socially secure.

1. Group Formation and Training:

When ZOE first enters a community, they engage local and tribal leaders to both vet participants and introduce the empowerment program. The youth, who are the heads of their households, elect leaders, set group rules, and decide on meeting schedules. Training on food security, health, business management, and child rights begins immediately. For instance, the Harmony Sadziwa Group started a nutritional garden to enhance food security and teamwork among members.

2. The Dream Process:

One of the transformative elements of ZOE's program is the Dream process, where children articulate their aspirations for the future. This exercise helps them set goals and develop a roadmap to achieve them, fostering a sense of purpose and direction. The dreams are regularly reviewed and updated, serving as a constant source of motivation.



3. Building Connections:

Isolation is a significant challenge for orphaned children. ZOE Empowers

creates vital connections through peer groups, mentors, and community leaders. These relationships provide moral support, resources, and a network to help children overcome challenges. The presence of Trinity's Harmony Group further strengthens these connections, providing not only financial support but also emotional and spiritual encouragement.



4. Child Rights and Health:

ZOE Empowers educates children about their rights and connects them with local officials to enforce these rights. Health education covers basic hygiene, disease prevention, and nutrition. Children receive necessary items like mosquito nets and hygiene products, ensuring they live healthier lives.

5. Income Generation and Financial Literacy:

Economic self-sufficiency is a core goal of ZOE's program. Children brainstorm viable business ideas, develop business plans, and receive micro-grants to start their enterprises. Through group projects and individual businesses, they learn financial management and the importance of saving and reinvestment.

6. Education and Housing:

Education is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty. ZOE assists children in returning to school by covering expenses like uniforms and fees. Housing support includes providing materials for repairs and temporary rent assistance, ensuring the children have a safe and stable living environment.

7. Faith and Community Engagement:

While ZOE's program is religiously non-restrictive, it offers a compelling example of Christian love in action. Meetings often begin with prayer and Scripture readings, and the children are encouraged to engage in community service, demonstrating their faith through their actions.

THE IMPACT OF TRINITY'S HARMONY GROUP

The Harmony Sadziwa Group in Zimbabwe comprises 27 households with a total of 82 children. These children, through the support of Trinity, are on a path to self-sufficiency. The

visit by Trinity's delegation highlighted the tangible results of ZOE's empowerment model. The team was deeply moved by the resilience and determination of the children. They witnessed the success stories of young entrepreneurs, the flourishing gardens providing nutritious food, and the renewed sense of hope in the eyes of the children.

A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

ZOE Empowers is more than just a program; it is a movement that transforms lives and communities. The tagline, "Helping children help themselves" encapsulates the essence of ZOE's mission. With the unwavering support of partners like Trinity, ZOE continues to create lasting change, empowering children to rise above their circumstances and forge a path to a brighter, self-sufficient future.

The partnership between ZOE Empowers and Trinity's Harmony Group exemplifies the profound impact that collaborative efforts can have on the lives of the most vulnerable. It is a powerful reminder that with compassion, support, and empowerment, even the most challenging circumstances can be transformed into stories of hope and success.

BFC (Becoming Fit at Church) Meets All Summer Long

By Beth Curry, BFC Instructor

Did you know the BFC Ministry exercise classes and BFO (Becoming Fit Outdoors) program continue year-round? While other ministries may take a break in June, July, and August, the BFC Ministry continues going strong all summer long. There will still be six weekly BFC exercise classes as usual offered in person and via ZOOM. All class donations go to community service. BFO will continue to meet Thursday evenings and will walk when weather permits but may explore other "cooler" options like swimming, cycling, kayaking and maybe even an exercise class when it's just too hot. Class fee offsets ministry costs.



BFC Ministry provides an opportunity to have Fellowship, Fun (sometimes even Food) and get Fit! For more information check out the website at <https://www.tumct.org/serve/bfc-becoming-fit-at-church/> or email Beth Curry at BFCSeries@yahoo.com for details and registration information. who had led the initial planning for the new church.



BFC and BFO Summer 2024 Calendar

Monday 7:30 pm – Flexibility for a Better You (zoom only) – *foam rolling and stretching*

Tuesday 9:45 am & Thursday 1:30 pm – Staying Strong – *basic gentle standing and seated exercise*

Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 am – Variety Mix – *fast paced full body work out (intermediate to advanced)*

Rev. Dr. Wayne Wiatt Returns to Trinity's Pulpit

by Tanya Holladay, Member of the Bicentennial Publicity Committee

There are some people who have a such profound impact upon you as a youth, whom you never forget and remain grateful for having had them in your life, if even for a brief time. The Rev. Dr. Wayne Wiatt is such a person.

I first met Wayne during the summer of my sophomore year of high school, when he joined the staff of Trinity United Methodist Church as our Summer Youth Director in 1976 and the following two summers. My sister and I thoroughly loved being in the very large and active youth group, and the youth worship services were filled with the Holy Spirit and holy fellowship. With his talented musical voice and guitar-strumming fingers, he led us in a traveling youth choir, delivering meals on wheels and on several mission, trips including Mountain Top Tennessee, Appalachia Service Project, and a mission trip to the Bahamas. His sincere, kind, and calming presence led to trust and confidence in his leadership and his obvious love for people left a lasting impression on me. Wayne was a true encourager. When I heard a few years later that he had followed the call to become an ordained minister, I knew that God would use him in a powerful way.

Rev. Wiatt grew up in rural North Florida. He holds a Master of Divinity degree and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Candler School of Theology, Emory University. He has served Florida Conference congregations including First Jacksonville, Palm Coast, Southside, Jacksonville, and completed 14 years of serving on the Bishop's Appointive and Extended Cabinets. He is a past director for the Office of Clergy Excellence, where he had responsibility for the care and oversight for all licensed and ordained clergy in the Florida Conference.

Wayne returned to Trinity in 2016 as Senior Pastor and what a joy it was for those of us who had known him during those

fun-packed, Spirit-filled 70s summers! Wayne led the Trinity congregation faithfully, concluding his tenure as Senior Pastor on June 30, 2022, serving one additional year as the North West District Superintendent. Retiring in June of 2023, his final formal ministerial role was to lead a trip to trace the journey of the Apostle Paul in Greece and Turkey. As with the summers of my youth, this trip was a highlight of a lifetime for those of us whom he led on that inspiring journey.



Ramona & Rev. Dr. Wayne Wiatt

Beyond his leadership and involvement in the local church, Wayne was an active member in Rotary International, Habitat for Humanity, United Way, Community Outreach Ministries, and Advocacy for Racial Justice and Inclusivity. He formerly served on the United Methodist Publishing House Board of Nashville, Tennessee, Board of Trustees for Bethune Cookman University, and the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Florida Conference, on which he served for twelve years. An avid water sports enthusiast, Wayne enjoys swimming, sailing, kayaking, water-skiing, and paddle boarding. He particularly enjoys exploring the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge and nearby parks.

Wayne is married to Ramona Folds, formerly of Titusville, who was previously an employee of the Disney Corporation. They have two grown children: Matthew (Katie) Wiatt, film makers in Lakeland, Florida, and Taylor (Phillip) Stokes, both employed with the University of Florida. They also enjoy spending their time with two granddaughters, Coraline Mae Stokes and Mariam Lily Stokes. Wayne and Ramona reside in Tallahassee in the "forever" home on Lake Talquin.

Wayne was involved in the early planning for Trinity's Bicentennial, and we'll welcome his return to Trinity as one of our guest clergy on Sunday, June 9.

Rev. Wayne Curry to Preach on July 14

by Kathy Drake, Member of the Bicentennial Publicity Committee

Rev. Wayne Curry arrived here at Trinity in 2008 after serving numerous churches around the state and as District Superintendent in two different districts. Born and raised in Miami, Wayne and his two older sisters attended Grace UMC surrounded with the love and support of their parents. After graduating high school, he continued his education at Florida Atlantic University obtaining a bachelor's degree in education (1971).

Heeding the call to ministry, Wayne attended Candler School of Theology, earning his master's degree in 1975.

The Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church benefited from Wayne's many gifts for the next 43 years, as he served at various churches around the state. He began his journey as Associate Pastor at Christ UMC in St. Petersburg (1975-79), Palm Harbor UMC (1979-88), Anona UMC in Indian Rocks (1988-93) and First United Methodist Church of Orlando (1993-2001).

Rev. Curry was appointed as the District Superintendent of the Deland District in 2001 and served until 2005, when, after a restructuring of the conference districts, he served three more years as the District Superintendent of the Gulf Central District.

From 2008 until his retirement in 2016, our own Trinity United Methodist Church was blessed to have Rev. Curry as Senior Pastor. We loved Wayne and Beth so much, we invited him back to be our Minister of Pastoral Care.

Wayne brought us an added gift of his wife, Beth, who has worked tirelessly to get us all in shape since she started the BFC program (Becoming Fit at Church) and the BFO program (Becoming Fit Outdoors), which have raised thousands of dollars for various charitable causes. She also makes a heavenly carrot cake! Wayne and Beth have two adult sons from his previous marriage and a daughter, as well as a "fur baby" named Chewy (who has big paws to fill after Sadie!)

Besides granting the space for the establishment of the Historical Preservation room on the third floor, we discovered Wayne's photographic abilities as he graced the walls of our education building hallways with an ever-changing photo collection of Trinity members and their activities. During his time as our Senior Pastor, he helped guide us through the long and time-consuming Visioning process, pointing us toward the future of

Trinity and the church we are striving to become. Most importantly, each week he ended the service with the reassuring words, "Always remember how much you are loved."

Our first meeting with Wayne occurred in the parking lot of Tallahassee's airport in the wee hours of the morning. Though that sounds a bit suspicious, we were there dropping our teenagers off for their mission trip to Juarez, Mexico, and Wayne had come to offer a prayer for their safety and success. We soon learned our new pastor had a special gift when he not only greeted us by name, but added, "Are Alex and AnnaLee excited about the trip?" We had not even met Wayne and yet, he not only knew our names, but which children belonged to us! I fondly call him a "freak of nature" as his ability to remember names is amazing! Maybe that has something to do with his previous job with



Rev. Wayne & Beth Curry

the CIA. (Ask him about that sometime!)

We have since been blessed to call him and Beth our good friends and were so happy to have them back after his retirement to serve as our pastoral minister. We are now spiritually and physically in better shape, and Wayne continues to call our Trinity family members by name! Wayne's role as pastoral minister doesn't offer many opportunities for him to preach, so it will be a special occasion when we welcome him as our guest clergy on Sunday, July 14.

The Post-WWII Years: A Time of Growth and Change

By Gloria Colvin, Chair of the Bicentennial Publicity Committee and Dr. Lynn McLarty, Church Historian

During the post-war years, Tallahassee and Trinity continued to grow. In 1945 Trinity purchased the remaining 75' of the lot immediately to the north which allowed the church to finally work toward building an educational complex. Our Trinity Hall was dedicated in October 1949. In 1948 the church purchased the western 85' of the lot at the southeast corner of Call and Duval. A home on the lot was used as a staff residence, and it later became the Terrell House. In 1956, the opportunity arose for the church to buy the lot north of Trinity Hall. The home on the lot was torn down, but the garage apartment remained to become the Scout House. To allay the need for more parking for the congregation, in 1957 and 1958 the church purchased three lots at the southwest corner of Call and Duval.

From the time Dr. Glenn James came to Trinity in 1953, he was determined to build a new sanctuary and chapel. All Quarterly Conference Minutes during the ensuing years consistently mentioned the construction of a new sanctuary as well as a chapel. Progress toward this goal solidified and monetary commitments

for its construction bounded beyond expectation. Following his sudden death in February 1962, work to build the sanctuary, fellowship hall, offices, and a chapel continued. On May 3, 1964, the new sanctuary was consecrated. The chapel was named in memory of Dr. James.



Setting of the cornerstone



April 5, 1894-February 25, 1962

Dr. Glenn James

As Tallahassee grew, Trinity helped establish additional Methodist churches. In 1947 Trinity aided in the formation of Tallahassee Heights Methodist. In 1952 Trinity sponsored the formation of St. Paul's Methodist Church and provided financial support for three years. Together St. Paul's and Trinity helped establish John Wesley Methodist Church in 1960. Several Trinity members left to help support this new church, and Associate Pastor Danny Morris became John Wesley's first pastor. As a joint effort by Trinity and the Tallahassee District, Calvary Methodist Church became a reality in 1964. The next year Trinity helped start Gray Memorial Methodist Church. The formation of Killearn United Methodist Church followed in 1969. Some time lapsed before Trinity supported the formation of Killearn Lakes United Methodist Church, later Deer Lake UMC, in 1987.

One hundred years had passed since the Civil War, and the issues of racial discrimination and segregation were again in the forefront of public debate. Jim Crow segregation was pervasive in most aspects of life in the South. Trinity, like most Southern churches, did not have Black members or even Black people who attended the church. Dr. Glenn James was Senior Pastor of Trinity when several Black people arrived one Sunday to attend a worship service. Some members present that day recall that he told ushers not to turn anyone away and to seat the visitors up front. Several people walked out of the church in protest, but most remained. Dr. James also spoke to the congregation about the church's failure to address the issue of race before then and noted that the way we treated Black people was a faith issue.

Integration in Tallahassee progressed slowly through the 1960s as desegregation of schools, a bus boycott, and lunch counter sit-ins brought racial inequality into focus. Dr. H. Melton Ware, Trinity's Senior Pastor from 1962 to 1965, recalled that during his tenure, people

throughout Tallahassee were discussing the demands for racial equality. “The Trinity congregation,” he wrote, “faced the issue frankly and remained faithful to the Scriptural ideal of acceptance of and compassion for all people of all races. The leadership of the Trinity congregation was outstanding during those years, which proved to be important to the church. The members were loyal, faithful, and generous in their support.”

Dr. George Foster succeeded Dr. Ware as Senior Pastor in 1965 and led Trinity through the rest of the Civil Rights era and through the administrative changes that were made in the Methodist Church nationally and in Florida in the late 1960s. A dynamic preacher and popular speaker, Dr. Foster served the last of four terms as a General Conference delegate while at Trinity and kept the church aware of needed social reforms.

As a result of the 1939 unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church South, a Central Jurisdiction had been established to administratively segregate Black members within the church. Following calls to abolish the Central Jurisdiction in favor of a racially inclusive church at the 1964 General Conference, the Florida Conference passed a resolution in 1966 to unite with the Florida Conference, Central Jurisdiction. In 1968 the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren merged to form the United Methodist Church and Trinity became Trinity United Methodist Church. The familiar logo of the cross and flame was introduced at the time of this merger. The following year, the Florida Conference united with the Florida Conference of the Central Jurisdiction, ending years of segregation within the church.

Foreign missions were an area of focus for Trinity during this time, and Cuba was of particular interest due to the political unrest there. The church supported Rev. Richard Milk and the Methodist Agricultural and Industrial School in Preston, Cuba for a number of years until Rev. Milk had to leave following Fidel Castro’s rise to power. Trinity also held annual church-wide mission studies focusing on different regions of the world, including Africa and South America.

Trinity Reflections

Compiled by the Bicentennial Publicity Committee

“Trinity has been a special place for me in so many ways: a place of comfort and safety and peace; a place of spiritual guidance and growth; a place to find Christian friends; a place that radiates friendship and love.”

—Nancy Kerce

“We came to Trinity two years ago because of the wonderful people. We were drawn by the exciting contemporary worship and found a place to serve our community with new friends.”

— Pat and Lyn Bevis

Memorials & Honorariums

In memory of **Joyce Peters** from Mr. & Mrs. John Everitt Drew, Mr. & Mrs. Mark Hillis, Suzanne Peschl, Mrs. Donna Frinks, Blair Lee Huss, Mr. & Mrs. John Davis, Sr., Patricia Martin, Mr. & Mrs. Yuill Duncan Moore, Gayle Nelson, Mr. & Mrs. James Trafton, Joe & Marti Hughes, III, Thomas Barron, Mr. Julian Smith, Jr., and Miss Emily Waugh

In memory of William Gunter from Mr. & Mrs. Mark Hillis and Lee Hinkle, Mrs. Kathaleen Guilday, Mr. & Mrs. Yuill Duncan Moore, Mr. & Mrs. Kelley Phillips, Mr. & Mrs. F. Palmer Williams, Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Betts, Jr., and A. Bruce Gillander

In memory of **Marvin Andrews** from Mrs. Nora Jackson

In memory of **Lina Knox** from Mrs. Susan McAlister



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WORSHIP SERVICES

Early Service: 8:30 a.m. in the sanctuary
Contemporary Service: 9:45 a.m. in Moor Hall
Liturgical Service: 11 a.m. in the sanctuary

Contemporary Service and 11 a.m. Liturgical Service are live streamed
Please visit www.tumct.org for viewing links

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Rev. Anna Brook Opalinski, *Associate Pastor*
Rev. Wayne Curry, *Minister of Pastoral Care*

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Yuliia Billa, *Director of Music*
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[Melanie Gonzalez](#), *Editor*

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