

Trinity United Methodist Church 903 Forest Avenue Henrico, Virginia 23229

November 2025

# The Trinity Window

#### PASTOR'S PEN

The Meaning of Thanksgiving: A Sacred Pause

We are in November, the month of Thanksgiving. What is Thanksgiving, really? To me, Thanksgiving is more than simply a holiday. It's a posture of the heart, an expression of our faith. In a world that moves quickly, where calendars overflow and needs close in from every side, Thanksgiving invites us to stop, to breathe, and to remember.

At its core, Thanksgiving is about gratitude—not just for abundance, but for presence. For the people who walk beside us, the stories that shape us, and the grace that sustains us. It's a time to look back with humility and forward with hope.

In scripture, gratitude is not just a suggestion but a spiritual practice. The psalmist writes, "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever" (Psalm 107:1). Gratitude opens our eyes to God's goodness, even in seasons of scarcity or struggle. It reminds us that we are not alone, and that every blessing, large or small, is a threat in the tapestry of grace.

For communities like Trinity, Thanksgiving is also a communal act. It's about gathering, sharing, and remembering that we belong to one another and with one another. Whether around a table or in a sanctuary, we give thanks not just for what we have, but for who we are becoming: together.

So this season, take a moment to pause and to take notice. May we give thanks with open hands and open hearts. May our gratitude ripple outward to become generosity, compassion, and joy.

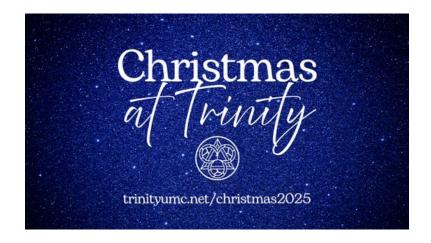
Yours in Christ (and Thanksgiving), Pastor Brian





#### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

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- Christmas at Trinity
- And more!



#### Sunday, November 30: Caroling, 3pm | Meet at Trinity

We'll gather at 2:45pm at Trinity to receive routes and coordinate carpools before leaving at 3pm to spread some cheer to some of our members!

Caroling teams will return to Trinity at 4:30pm for hot chocolate and cookies in the Welcome Center.

#### **Registration requested**

#### Sunday, December 7: Create and Celebrate, 3pm | Trinity Hall

Come out for an evening of crafting - create new decorations for your home this holiday season!

There will be crafts for all ages; children are welcome to attend in their pajamas.

From 5-6pm, we'll join in Trinity Hall for a pizza dinner. We're having a dessert potluck:

bring your favorite dessert to share!

#### **Registration requested**

#### Sunday, December 14: Lessons and Carols, 3pm | Sanctuary

A beloved holiday tradition: join us for this spectacular musical experience in the Sanctuary! Enjoy a multi-voice choir with special musicians, under the direction of Ben Miller, as they lead us in a celebration of the season in music and Scripture.

There will be a small reception after the concert in the Welcome Center.

**Sunday, December 21: Christmas Play and Cookies**, 3pm | Trinity Hall Our Trinity members are putting on a play! Get in the holiday spirit by watching "'Twas the Night Before" and enjoying celebratory cake afterwards.

You're invited to bring cookies to share!

#### Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Eve Worship

4pm: Instant Christmas Pageant
6pm: Modern Service
8pm and 11pm: Traditional Services
6pm, 8pm, and 11pm will include candlelight. All services will include Communion.

Sunday, December 28: Carol Sing and Tacky Sweater Sunday | Combined service at 10am

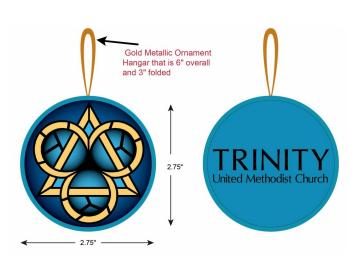
For events where registration is requested, find links to register on our website at: trinityumc.net/christmas2025

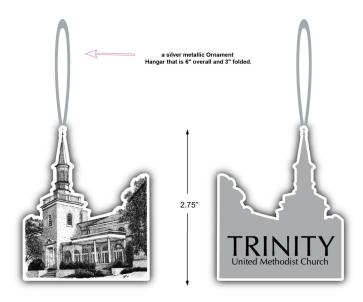
#### TRINITY CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS COMING SOON!

This Advent, we are hosting a fundraiser!

These high-quality, custom embroidered ornaments made by a small business will be for sale in the weeks to come for \$12 each—or a special price of \$30 for all three!

Make sure to check our Weekly Connection e-mails for more information and how to purchase coming soon!







#### AN UPDATE FROM OUR FINANCE COMMITTEE

Hello Trinity!

This is the November update from your Finance Committee.

At the end of September, we continue a positive path for this 6- month period, July to December 2025.

- We have pledged and non-pledged revenue of \$341,000 which is \$64,000 over the year-to-date budget.
- Expenses are \$10,000 over year-to-date budget
- Our year-to-date net profit through the end of September is \$19,000.

This is a good start for the 6-month budget, but as you know we are headed into colder weather and property expenses can be expected to rise. We must continue to be vigilant about our expenses and need everyone to meet or exceed their pledges.

You should have all received your quarterly statement in early October. Please let us know if you did not or if you have any questions. You will receive another statement mid-December so that you can ensure that you have met your pledge or what you need to complete it before year end.

The stewardship campaign for 2026 is nearing completion. We have updated our goal to \$1,416,000, which will allow us to meet our average annual expenses. At the beginning of October, estimates of giving were \$948,051. You received a letter explaining our updated goal and providing a new estimate of giving card. As of October 27, 2025, our total estimate of giving is \$1,001,546. Obviously, we are significantly short of our goal by \$414,454. If you have sent in your card, we thank you. There are many who have pledged in previous years that have not responded. If you have not, but you plan to do so please get your estimate of giving card in as soon as possible.

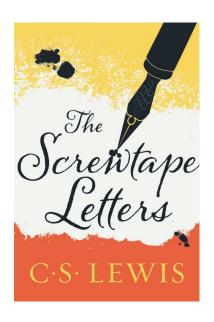
Now a "Did You Know"!

• **Did you know** that if you give to specific ministries (YAH, Students, Kids, etc) and not to the stewardship campaign for the general fund your contribution **can not** be used to meet the monthly expenses of the church (salaries, ministries, paper, copiers, heating and cooling etc.) all the things necessary for those ministries to function. If you give to the general fund, your gifts are used to support all ministries as well as for the basic operating expenses. Of course, if you want to give to a specific ministry above your stewardship contribution please do so! It is most appreciated. Your pledging helps us plan and budget for the year ahead.

Trinity, thank you for all that you do for our wonderful church. We have so many exciting things happening and I can't wait to see what we can do as we wrap up 2025 and look forward to 2026.

In Christ,

Elaine Peele Finance Chair



## PASTOR DANIEL'S STUDY

On **November 6**, Pastor Daniel will begin a study of C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*. Publisher's marketing description: "At once wildly comic, deadly series, and strikingly original, C.S. Lewis gives us the correspondence of the worldly-wise devil to his nephew Wormwood, a novice demon in charge of securing the damnation of an ordinary young man. *The Screwtape Letters* is the most engaging account of temptation—and triumph over it—ever written."

Pastor Daniel's study meets **Thursday evenings from 6 to 7:30pm** in room 323. No registration is required; just come as you can and as you are! You will provide your own book.

#### TRINITY STUDENTS: SAVE THE DATE!

We have some exciting events coming: save the date for our **Friendsgiving Potluck—Sunday, November 23—and our Christmas Party—Sunday, December 14**. Sign Ups to come in a future issue of the Student News from Pastor Daniel!

### PUB THEOLOGY— NOVEMBER 18

On **Tuesday, November 18**, our special guest for Pub Theology will be **Anthony Romanello**. Anthony is the Executive Director of the Henrico Economic Development Authority. Anthony has been an extraordinary leader for Henrico County. His leadership experiences beyond Henrico County have been transformational, as well.

We meet at WayGone Brewery in the Canterbury shopping center on Patterson Avenue. Start time is 5:45pm, and the program ends by 7:00. The church provides pizza and requests a \$5 donation to help offset the cost. Water, soft drinks, beer, hard seltzer, and wine are available for purchase. You do not need to be a consumer of alcohol to attend. With any questions, contact Bill Pike at bpike@trinityumc.net.

We hope to see you there!

#### **JOYS & CONCERNS**

Jane Hobeika passed away on September 23.

Thomas Rockhold passed away on September 30.

Larry Girvin passed away on October 3.

Janne Christman passed away on October 22.

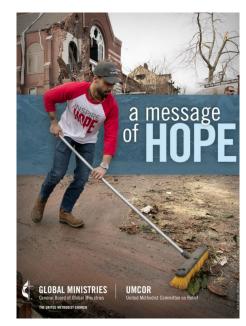
Pat Gulick passed away on October 28.

Kayla Miller and Hunter Shelnutt were married on September 27.

Laura Grace and Caroline Kemp Rosenstock were baptized on October 12.

#### TRINITY'S EXTRA-MILE GIVING AT WORK: EARNING A+ FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

Part of Trinity's 2025 LEMO (Lenten Easter Mission Offering) was allocated to UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief. UMCOR is rated A+ among well-known charities by the independent financial watchdog Charity Watch, which gave just 170 grades (B+ or higher), among them 32 A+ grades. On October 5—World Communion Sunday for Protestant churches—an info search found that earlier in the month, UMCOR had given about \$500,000 in humanitarian aid to each of several countries with people in great need, including Lebanon, two other Middle Eastern countries, and Somaliland in east Africa. UMCOR had recently given humanitarian aid for the people of



Ukraine, Israel, and Gaza. UMCOR earns it's A+ grade through minimizing administrative expenses by working with partner humanitarian organizations.

Three Richmond-area charities, highly deserving of their regular hands-on help from Trinity members, also received substantial funding from our 2025 LEMO.

#### GOOCHLANDCARES

GoochlandCares, one of our three key mission partners, created special opportunities for Trinity members to serve!

**Food Pantry Small Group**: Volunteers are needed for this group that will meet the second Saturday of each month from 9 to 11am. Action items include cleaning up around the food pantry (4 volunteers) and picking up donated food from Publix (2 volunteers) before bringing it to the Pantry for unloading.

**Clothes Closet Small Group**: 5-6 volunteers are needed on the second Monday of each month from 9:30 to 11:30am to assist with sorting donated clothing and housewares.

You can sign up for these serving opportunities via Sign Up Genius. We already have four people signed up for the first spot at the Food Pantry - join the group!

Carol Wampler, our GoochlandCares contact, has prepared wonderful resources and guides to get started with volunteering. See them on our website, along with the link to the Sign Up Genius, at: https://www.trinityumc.net/missions.







#### LAST MONDAYS

Last Mondays is a new fall class offering from Bill Pike. This class will focus on an assortment of faith connections related to books, movies, and songs. The format will feature how books, movies, and songs can influence our faith journeys and thinking. Discussion will be generated from responding to the materials presented. No prep is needed for this class. Class will meet on November 24—the theme for November is "home". Start is at 5:30pm in Room 309 (where FaithWorks meets). Class will end by 6:45. With questions, e-mail Bill Pike: bpike@trinityumc.net.







#### BELLEMEADE CONSERVE AND CREATE

On Saturday, December 6, we will have our last Bellemeade Conserve and Create until March! Join us at Bellemeade Park between 9am and noon to help with light grounds work. All ages are welcome; there are opportunities for everyone. Thank you for your support!

#### YOUNG AT HEART OPPORTUNITIES

On November 11 from 2 to 3:30pm, join Young at Heart in Trinity Hall as we enjoy (and participate in!) a program with the Tuckahoe Square Dancing Group.



On December 10, we will take a trip to Riverside Theater to see "White Christ-

mas". The all-inclusive cost is \$75 per person; less than 10 spots remain. To sign up, e-mail Judy at care@trinityumc.net.

#### OAK GROVE ELEMENTARY ANGEL TREE

Trinity has partnered with Oak Grove Bellemeade Elementary School for well over 20 years. Most of you are familiar with the **Apple Angel Tree** that goes up prior to the beginning of each school year. That project allows us to provide school supplies requested by the teachers for their classrooms.

This year, we are adding a **Holiday Angel Tree** to provide Christmas gifts for 25 Oak Grove students. These students have been recommended by teachers working with Oak Grove's social worker and Communities in Schools representative.

The Angel Tree will be in the Welcome Center **beginning November 16**. You will be able to pick an angel tag and provide three gifts for that student—a toy, a book, and an article of clothing. The tag for each angel will provide information about the student, including age, sizes, and interests to help with shopping. Gifts should be wrapped separately and returned in a plastic bag tied shut with the tag attached to the bag.

The gifts will be distributed to families before school is out for the Winter Holiday and need to be returned to the Welcome Center no later than **Sunday**, **December 14** to meet that goal.

#### THANKSGIVING CLUSTER SERVICE

This Thanksgiving Eve, take a break from the busy hustle and bustle, and come find some peace and time for quiet reflection on **Wednesday**, **November 26 at 7:00pm**. This year, we've invited our Northside Cluster to join us for the service —and even for a community choir directed by Ben (see more on page 7)! We hope that this peaceful and meditative service will help focus on the many graces and reasons for gratitude in our lives.



#### FOOD PANTRY THANKSGIVING BAGS REMINDER

This is our third year working toward a goal of delivering **100 Thanksgiving bags to our neighbors at the Sherbourne Food Pantry**: a bag filled with items for Thanksgiving and the long weekend, including stuffing, cranberries, vegetables, potatoes, macaroni and cheese, soup, pancake mix, syrup, cake supplies, and more. You can pick up a bag in the Welcome Center or in Trinity Hall near the food donation tables. All the information you need will be on the bag. **Bags are due back on Sunday, November 16** and will be delivered the very next day to Sherbourne.

Additional help is needed delivering the bags to Sherbourne on Monday, November 17th. If you are able to help, please contact Karen Adams; her contact information is on the Thanksgiving bags.

#### VETERANS PANCAKE BREAKFAST

The Outreach Veterans Pancake Breakfast will be held on Sunday, November 9. Breakfast will be served from 8:15am until 9:50 and will include pancakes, bacon, baked apples, coffee, and juice. The cost is \$5 per person or \$15 per family; proceeds from this event will be used for community outreach.

Our program will start at 10am. We are honored this year to have David L. Robbins as our guest speaker. A native of Richmond, David is the author of sixteen novels; several have made the New York Times Bestseller list and have film options. Additionally, four of David's stage plays have been professionally produced.

Additionally, David is the founder of the Mighty Pen Project. In cooperation with the Virginia War Memorial, this program "gives Virginia's military veterans and their families training and community to turn their memories of military service into written, archived narratives. The Mighty Pen produces an annual short-story journal, a one-act play festival, and a podcast."

In his presentation on November 9, David will also bring another special guest; one of the veterans who has participated in the Mighty Pen Project. We hope you will join us for this extraordinary opportunity.

Finally, if you have a Trinity Veteran that you would like to be recognized at this program, please send their name and branch of military that they served to Bill Pike at bpike@trinityumc.net or call the church office. **The deadline for submitting names is Wednesday, November 5.** 



#### CONGRATULATIONS, BEN!

On Sunday, October 19, Trinity's own Ben Miller won an "Artsie" - an award given by the Richmond Theater Community Circle. Ben won under the category for **Best Musical Direction** for the musical *A Strange Loop* performed by the Richmond Triangle Players. *A Strange Loop* was the big winner of the night, also taking the award for Best Musical!



#### A NOTE FROM BEN MILLER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Hello, Trinity Family-

I hope your Fall is going well, and that you are looking forward to the holiday season! I have some updates for you about worship and music as we look forward to Advent and Christmas.

It's been wonderful to get to know how Trinity does worship these past few months. More and more I am trying to plan music that elevates our Scripture and sermon for the day, while unifying our church between the two different worship styles. You should be seeing the beginnings of this and will see it more in the coming months.

I'm pleased to announce that we will be hosting a Thanksgiving Eve service with our Charge Cluster. Be on the lookout for information about a Community Choir with our partner churches. This will be an easy, low time-commitment opportunity and a great way to fellowship in music with other congregations.

Lessons & Carols rehearsals have begun. If you'd like to sing in this worship service, rehearsals are each Wednesday at the beginning of choir rehearsal (6:30p - 7:15p).

For Christmas Eve we have four (4) separate worship services for you and your family to choose from based on your schedule and preferences. They are:

4:00p - An improvised nativity pageant for children and their families. No preparation required.

6:00p - Modern Worship with music led by the Trinity Praise Team.

8:00p - Traditional Worship with music led by the Trinity Choir.

11:00p - Meditative Worship. This is quite similar to the Traditional service, but is adapted to greet the newborn King in a simple and beautiful atmosphere.

And on the Sunday following Christmas we will have a casual Combined Worship service with Christmas carols by request. Start choosing your tacky sweaters now!

If you have any questions about your Music Ministry, I hope you will reach out to me directly. Soli Deo Gloria-

Ben Miller

#### THANK YOU!

Special thanks to **Charlie Gaskins**.

Charlie has spent many hours this fall power washing sidewalks and steps.

We appreciate the dedication of **Rob Spotts** for his continued support in keeping our grounds in good shape.

Additionally, we thank Rick Weisensale for the energy and time he has given the church in researching the new HVAC system. Rick has used his industry contacts for securing and setting up programming that will eventually allow for monitoring of the system within the building and off site, too. Rick has been relentless in this pursuit, and we thank him for his dedication!

#### TRINITY IS COMING TO LAKEWOOD!

#### Thursday, November 6, 3-4pm, Simms Center

Our Trinity Staff have been in dialogue with the chaplains at Lakewood to plan a "Trinity Celebration" on site there. Both sides are excited to make this a reality—for our members who live at Lakewood, as well as for Lakewood residents.

We will gather in the Simms Center at Lakewood on Thursday, November 6, 3-4pm. There will be a devotion by Pastor Brian, music by Ben Miller, and lots of wonderful fellowship!

We plan for these celebrations to occur quarterly. Everyone is welcome! Contact Judy Oguich at care@trinityumc.net with any questions.

#### TWO CHURCHES, SHARED STORY

Third Street Bethel AME and Trinity United Methodist both spring from what was Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in downtown Richmond in 1790.

Third Street is celebrating its 175th anniversary and recently recognized Trinity United Methodist at a prayer breakfast. Along with others, both churches now partner on the New Shoes for Back to School ministry, which provides shoes for schoolchildren across metropolitan Richmond.

Pictured: Beth Monroe, Trinity, and Rita Willis, Third Street Bethel AME



#### THANK YOU FROM PAULA, OFFICE MANAGER

I am very thankful to the staff and the dedicated volunteers who helped to cover the office while I was out with my second (and last!) knee replacement surgery. I felt all your prayers and good thoughts and was blessed as evidenced by the successful surgery and great recovery. It was a joy to read each message and card that I received. I felt loved and missed. God is good, all the time!



#### 72<sup>nd</sup> Harvest Day – November 13 Sanctuary – 10am 'Light Bearers'



This year's Harvest Day service will feature guest speaker Nancy Toscano, President & CEO of Shineforth (formerly UMFS). The offering will support the new learning and therapy greenhouse with the supplies (tools, seeds, pots, etc.) that the children will need as they work with plants and flowers. A reception in the Welcome Center will follow the service.

#### Mini Loaves for Oak Grove

Join us in providing mini loaves of bread for Oak Grove ES this holiday season. We would like to share a loaf of bread with each teacher, staff member, cafeteria worker and bus driver at the school. Pick up loaf pans and instructions on Harvest Day, November 13, and bring the loaves of bread to Trinity on Service Day, December 11.



#### Save the Date! Service Day – December 11 Trinity Hall – 9am

We will take a break at 10am for a program of music by the students at the Anna Julia Cooper School followed by cookies with the students.

#### **Circle News**

All Trinity UWF Circles welcome new members.

Circle 1 – In November we will attend Harvest Day and not have a Circle meeting.

<u>Circle 4</u> – We will meet on November 6 at 11am in room 324. Mark Coakley, Henrico County General Registrar, will talk to us on lessons learned from the recent election with an eye to next year's election.

<u>Circle 7</u> – During our monthly meeting on November 20th, we will be making gifts for TUMC staff and writing Christmas cards that will be given to Trinity's homebound.

<u>Circle 10</u> – On November 6 at 7pm, we will meet at the home of Jan Booker to hear about the Ronald MacDonald House from Emily Toalson.

#### Three Notch'd District UWF Events

Advent Meeting, December 6, 10am Bon Air UMC – 1645 Buford Rd, Richmond Speaker: The Rev. Florence Brooks



#### What's Happening in Trinity KIDS Ministry?

#### 9AM Worship Hour: Nursery available for kids under three



Preschool – Elementary: **Kids Church** (kids are dismissed before the first song and return by the last song).

#### 10AM Discipleship Hour:

Nursery available for kids under three

Preschool – Elementary: **Stay, Pray, and Play** - Kids gather in Trinity Hall. Our time starts with Ben Miller, our Director of Music, leading the kids in music and movement for 25 minutes.

For the remainder of the time, kids choose from playing games (dodgeball, pickleball, basketball, gaga ball), board games, or crafts.

#### 11AM Worship Service:

Nursery will be available for kids three and under.





Can you imagine if Esther and Mordecai were spies sent on a mission to infiltrate the palace and thwart Haman's plot to harm the Jewish people? It might sound like a stretch, but God was working behind the scenes the entire time, even though God's name is missing from the official records! In this 5-week series, kids will learn that God gives me a mission, nothing will turn me away from God, I can stand up for God and others, I can follow God even when nobody's watching, and God can send me to make peace.



Transit is our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade program at Trinity! It is open to all 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Trinity and in our community! We meet 3x each month from September – November and January – March at Trinity from 5-7pm on Sunday evenings in room 302. Our program includes dinner and activities/games!

Our remaining fall dates for Transit are: November 9, 16, 23



Kids Church at 9am: <a href="https://bit.ly/4fapSEo">https://bit.ly/4fapSEo</a>













# **THANK YOU!**

To everyone who donated their time, trunk, or candy for this year's Fall Festival!

A special thank you to our partners for hosting trunks: Scouting America Troop 799G, Upward Basketball, James River Art League, and Westview on the James

#### SUPPORT TRINITY'S CUB SCOUTS!



## Lasagna Luau and Silent Auction

Sunday November 16, 2025 5:30pm-7:30pm Trinity United Methodist Church 903 Forest Ave, Richmond

Join us for a night full of great food, laughter, and community spirit!

Pack 799 will be hosting the Lasagna Luau on Sunday, November 16.

Tickets are \$15 per person.

Get a meal and give several meals to local children! A portion of the dinner ticket sales will go towards purchasing food to create healthy meals for families over the weekend and during school breaks, when children do not have access to school lunch.

Silent Auction! The Lasagna Luau will include a Silent Auction during dinner. Funds raised will provide unique opportunities for our Scouts this year. Items for bid include:

- 4 floor seats to VCU Basketball Saturday November 22
- One week summer camp at Virginia Outside
- Half day fishing trip on the Rappahannock
- Gift cards to The Melting Pot, Gelati Celesti and Quinn
- A Lego-thermed basket, a family game night basket, 3-D printed neckerchief slides, and more!

We hope every Scout family will support the Auction by signing up below. The success of Luau and Auction depends on you!

O	PURCHASE A TICKET to the Lasagna Luau here: https://my.cheddarup.com/c/pack799luau2025/items		
0	follow this link to DONATE an item or service for the Silent Auction:		
	https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B44ABAC23A0F85-58859641-scouts#/		
0	Follow this link to VOLUNTEER to help with the Lasagna Luau:		
	https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B4DADA923A3FAC61-59659245-lasagna#/		

Questions regarding the Silent Auction? Contact Jenny Orr- Jenny.orr3@gmail.com; (919) 260-9456

Questions regarding the Lasagna Luau? Contact Tom Hardman-Thomasrhardman@gmail.com; (703) 307-5890

Thank you for supporting our Cub Scouts!

#### FLOWER TRIBUTE AT CHRISTMAS

Advent is a time when w choose to honor and/or memorialize loved ones by listing their names in the bulletin during the Christmas season.

The cost to have a tribute "in honor of" or "in memory of" listed in the bulletins at Christmas is \$20.

The funds received will be used to offset the cost of flowers used to decorate the sanctuary and foyers for the Christmas season. Monies received above the cost of the flowers will be donated to mission work.

The deadline for receiving contributions is Tuesday, December 2, 2025.

Tear off and place this form in the offering plate OR fill out	
Attached is my donation in the amount of: \$	
Please list the following tribute in the bulletin during the	Christmas season:
In <b>honor</b> of:	
Given by:	
AND/OR	
In <b>memory</b> of:	
Given by:	
Donor's Name and Phone Number:	

#### DECEMBER DEADLINE

Articles for the December edition of The Window are due by November 17. All articles or questions may be submitted to Laura Maher at lmaher@trinityumc.net. Thank you!

