

# The Quest

## Trinity Church

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

January 2026

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### About Trinity Church

Trinity Church is an ecumenical Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation. We are affiliated with the American Baptist Church, the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church.

Sunday service hours:  
10 a.m. (Nursery care is available.)

Office hours:  
Monday - Wednesday - 9 a.m.-12 p.m.  
Thursday – 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
(413) 625-2341

Pastor - Benjiman Durfee  
Leadership Team Co-chairs:  
Beth Martin & Wayne Perrea  
Music Director - Keith Rollinson  
Church Secretary - Brook Batteau  
Nursery Attendant - Lisa Porter  
Facilities Staff- Pat Valeski

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### *From Pastor Benjiman Durfee*

Dear Trinity,

As we begin a new year at Trinity Church, it feels less like starting over and more like stepping forward with confidence. We come into January carrying real joy, deep gratitude, and a growing sense that something meaningful is unfolding among us.

This past year was full of life. We celebrated baptisms with joy that spilled beyond the font and into the whole congregation. We welcomed new members. We gathered around the communion table again and again, trusting that God meets us there with grace, nourishment, and strength. Week by week, Trinity has continued to be a place where people are welcomed and encouraged to bring their whole selves.

Beyond our walls, the ministry of this church continues to be visible and vibrant. Through the community meal, the clothes closet, the monthly food drive, adopt-a-family, book groups, event tabling, and countless quiet acts of care, Trinity has continued to show what it looks like to love our neighbors in practical, dignified, and compassionate ways.

As we begin this new year, I feel a strong sense of momentum in the life of our church. We are not only imagining who we might become someday; we are building on a foundation that is already solid. And that brings us to an important and exciting moment in our shared ministry. On January 25, the congregation will be asked to vote on a capital campaign—a significant step that reflects careful discernment, shared commitment,

and hope for the future of Trinity Church. This is more than a financial decision. It is a chance to say yes to the ongoing ministry of this community, to invest in the space where worship, care, outreach, and connection happen, and to take a faithful step forward together.

As January unfolds, my hope is that every member of Trinity feels invited into this moment, not just to vote, but to celebrate. Celebrate the ministries that have shaped us. Celebrate the relationships that sustain us. Celebrate the fact that we are a church willing to dream, plan, and move forward together.

Thank you for being part of a community that is alive with purpose, grounded in love, and ready to take meaningful steps together. I am deeply grateful for you and truly excited for what we are building together.

With joy and anticipation,

*Pastor Ben*

**CLOTHES CLOSET DECEMBER DATES**

**Wednesday:**

**the 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 11:00-3:30**

**Saturdays:**

**the 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 10:00-12:00**

**FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

This month Trinity Church enjoyed a very Blessed Advent Season! With the deeply faithful leadership of our Pastor Ben, we truly “Lived out our Joy” as he had invited us to do! We are extremely grateful for Pastor Ben’s amazing sermons and time with children’s messages; for the Lay leaders whose contributions were very special: for Keith Rollinson and the Trinity Church Choir for the beautiful music as well as for all the parishioners who joined these Celebrations either in the pews or from home. The Advent Season concluded with a glorious Christmas Eve Candlelight Service attended by 70 plus people. The young ones followed Pastor Ben out to the Creche with the Baby Jesus in their precious hands to be laid gently in the manger! Hallelujah!

Many hands joined to help “decorate” for the Advent season. We extend much gratitude to Ginny Ray, Frank Priscaro and Eileen McCusker Rauch for the Greening of the sanctuary and the Narthex. Many Thanks to Wayne Perrea, Mark Naccarato and David Freitas for expertly setting up our beautiful Creche this year! Finally, thank you to Ginny Ray for once again organizing our Poinsettia display to honor or memorialize loved ones.

Trinity Church continued the annual mission with the Adopt A Family Program. Sue Mead was our faithful leader again this year and we cannot thank her enough for all her work in bringing this to fruition! Thanks to everyone who bought gifts which gave two Franklin County families great Joy for sure!

The Martin, Chamberland and Rubinaccio families wish to Thank Pastor Ben (Sheldon), and Pastor Glen Prescott for leading the spectacular Baptismal service for our Beloveds! We are grateful to all the Trinity family who blessed them as well! This was truly a day we will cherish in our memories forever!

Now we say a fond farewell to 2025 and all that it meant to each of us here in our Beautiful Trinity Community of faithful ones! May we move forward with open hearts and minds to do God's will together in 2026!

With Many Blessings from The Leadership Team,

*Sarah Neelon, Nancy Parland and Wayne Perrea and Beth Martin*

### ANNUAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 15

## Please attend the Annual Meeting: February 15<sup>th</sup> after worship.

### PUTTING YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER

Join us at **Trinity Church on Sunday, February 22nd, following worship**, for *Putting Your House in Order*, a thoughtful and practical presentation designed to bring peace of mind at any stage of life. This step-by-step program helps demystify organizing your estate—property, accounts, investments, and more—while offering guidance on communicating your wishes, establishing your legacy, understanding the importance of a will, and planning for things like guardianship for children and care for pets. Whether you're just beginning to think about these matters or revisiting them, this conversation is for you. All are welcome.

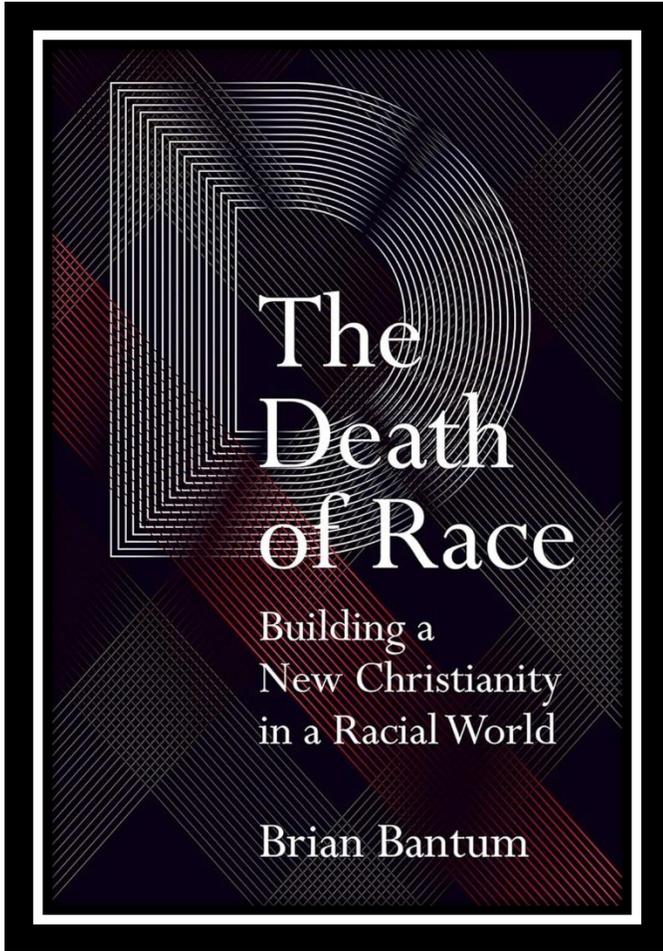
**Please RSVP to [trinitychrch@gmail.com](mailto:trinitychrch@gmail.com)  
or (413) 625-2341 so we can plan accordingly.**

### CREATION CARE CIRCLE MEETING

Please join us at 1:00pm on Tuesday January 6th for our next Creation Care Circle Meeting. We will be discussing our participation in a special celebration for Earth Day, as well as reviewing green church rubrics to decide on next steps we can take at our church. Please let Pastor Ben know if you plan to attend!



## WHAT'S PASTOR BEN READING?



From January 12–16, I'll be heading to my seminary campus in Evanston, IL for an intensive theology course taught by my professor, Brian Bantum, whose book *The Death of Race: Building a New Christianity in a Racial World* is required pre-reading. In it, Bantum argues that race is not just a social or biological category, but something that has been embodied through systems of power that shape whose lives are valued and whose are constrained. Racism, then, is not only a social problem—it is a deeply theological one, tied to how we understand incarnation, creation, and what it means to be human.

What has struck me most is the book's claim that healing racism requires confronting a distorted view of our bodies;

one that treats difference as something to fear or control. As a church that gathers as real, embodied people, this challenges us to reflect on how our faith shapes the way we see, welcome, and honor one another. I'm heading into this course with more questions than answers, and I'd love to be in conversation with you about them. Theology is something we do best together.

## CONFLUENCE: 2026 EARTH DAY RENEWAL

### Save the Date!

*Awakening, Healing, Restoring, Collaborating*

Saturday, April 18, 2026, 9:00 am

**The Retreat Farm, Rte. 30, Brattleboro, Vermont**

Sponsored by New England UM Conference Creation Care  
 The Beloved Community: Brattleboro UMC and First Baptist Church Brattleboro  
 Trinity Church, Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

## FROM THE FEASIBILITY AND LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Please plan to join us on Sunday, January 25 immediately after the 10 a.m. service for a special congregational meeting to vote on each project in our proposed capital campaign.

As we have said, following the Feasibility Study interviews with our consultant, Jennifer Williams, our teams met and we are excited to affirm a capital campaign to support several important ministries of our church. They are to repair the organ, improve our audio/visual situation to allow live-streaming and upgrading of electrical and other equipment/make the area safe for videographers, and install a generator as the needed step to making our church an emergency shelter.

The study report is available in both hard copy and electronically, so please ask us or the office for one and we'll get it to you, if you don't have it.

Members will vote at the Jan. 25 meeting on the on the dollar amounts to be raised. We will not proceed without strong support, so please join us and vote.

We will soon give you more precise costs for each aspect of the proposed campaign so you can consider the cost of each with full information before you vote. If you have any questions, please reach out to us.

May our faith be great and blessings abundant this New Year as we look to the future of our beloved church,

Ginny, Beth, Nancy, Clare, Eileen, Sarah, Ben, and Wayne



# Guess Who?



Baptisms!



The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: ★

<b>CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 2026</b>
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Thursday	1	7 pm AA
Friday	2	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	3	
<b>Sunday</b>	4	10 am. Service
Monday	5	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	6	
Wednesday	7	9:30 Playgroup; 11 - 3:30 Clothes Closet
Thursday	8	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	9	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	10	10 am -12 pm Clothes Closet
<b>Sunday</b>	11	10 am service
Monday	12	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	13	
Wednesday	14	9:30 Playgroup; 11 am -3:30 pm Clothes Closet; Climate Chorus (7-8:30 pm)
Thursday	15	7 pm AA
Friday	16	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	17	
<b>Sunday</b>	18	10 am service
Monday	19	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	20	
Wednesday	21	
Thursday	22	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	23	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	24	10 am -12 pm Clothes Closet
Sunday	25	10 am service; 11 am All Church Meeting
Monday	26	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	27	
Wednesday	28	9:30 Playgroup; 11 am -3:30 pm Clothes Closet
Thursday	29	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	30	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	31	

# *The Quest*

LECTIONARY FOR JANUARY 2026	
January 4	Jeremiah 31:7-14; Ephesians 1:3-6,15-19a; Matthew 2:13-15,19-23 or Luke 2:41-52 or Matthew 2:1-12; Psalm 84 or 84:1-8
January 11	Isaiah 42:1-9; Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17; Psalm 29
January 18	Isaiah 49:1-7; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42; Psalm 40:1-12
January 25	Isaiah 9:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23; Psalm 27:1, 5-13

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