

# The Quest

## Trinity Church

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

JUNE  
2026

### 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,

I'm writing to you from the 9th floor of the hotel I'm staying in for the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in Manchester, NH. My window has a beautiful view that looks out at rows of brick mill buildings with a rolling mountain backdrop.

I don't know much about this city, but wondering about the history of the mill buildings peaked my interest, so I decided to do a little research. For a long time, after the textile industry collapsed, those buildings stood as quiet monuments to a bygone era. But as Colin Woodard highlighted in a fascinating Politico article titled "[How a 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Town Became a New Millenium Marvel](#)," the city didn't give up on its history. Instead of tearing them down, visionaries looked at those old spaces and imagined something entirely new. They transformed the historic mill yard into a bustling tech, education, and economic hub that completely revived Manchester into the vibrant city it is today. They honored the foundation of the past, but adapted it to serve the needs of the modern community.

It occurs to me, that right now, Trinity is at a strikingly similar, pivotal point in our own ministry. We are on the very cusp of a beautiful renewal as we officially launch our Building Joy campaign. Just like Manchester's mills, this moment is about honoring our rich history while boldly looking toward new ways of using our 19<sup>th</sup>-century building to meet the needs of our neighbors.

Our plans, like installing a new generator so we can serve as a dependable emergency hub, are a perfect example

of this shift. We aren't pouring energy into these physical walls just for institutional survival or to focus on financial profits. We are doing it for community-wide resilience. We want our space to be a hub of safety, care, and connection for everyone in our neighborhood, ensuring that we are ready for whatever the future holds.

And wow, what a way to start this new chapter together! I am still riding the wave of joy and excitement that filled the room during our kick-off brunch this past Sunday. The energy was absolutely infectious. The absolute highlight of the morning was getting to share the incredible news that, through the immense generosity of early commitments, we have already raised over \$196,000 toward our \$250,000 goal!

To be nearly 80% of the way there at the very start of our public launch is a testament to the deep love, faith, and commitment that lives in this congregation. Thank you to everyone who has already stepped up, and to everyone who brings their unique gifts, presence, and spirit to this collective table.

We are building something truly joyful together, Trinity! I can't wait to see how this space continues to transform lives and this community.

With deep gratitude and joy, *Pastor Ben*

#### **FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

May was certainly a much quieter month following our very busy Trinity Church schedules for March and April. We welcomed the slightly slower pace while trying to keep up with Mother Nature's weather roller coaster.

The Leadership Team continues discussions and research regarding our lift. We plan to consult with two other lift companies for their expertise and comparison costs.

Sarah Neelon has agreed to be our liaison for The Interfaith Council. The leaders of the group meet monthly and the Council has an annual meeting. Sarah will attend meetings as necessary.

The Leadership Team voted unanimously to accept Trinity Church's Land Acknowledgement Statement. This Statement will be brought forth for a Congregational vote at a meeting date to be determined.

Pastor Ben reported that one of our parishioners had suggested the possibility of Trinity returning to wearing name tags. This was well received by the team. Pastor Ben's on line research found a company with the magnetic type on sale, a win for sure.

Wow! What an amazing time we had at our Trinity Church Kick-off Celebration for the Building Joy Capital Campaign on Sunday May 31st at the Shelburne Falls Pub and Brew. We are thrilled to know that the figure already raised, over \$196,000, is approximately 80% of the total goal. We extend our sincere gratitude to the Many hands and hearts that made this event a success and look forward to moving onward to achieving the total goal of \$250,000 within the remaining months.

With Blessings, *Clare Chapman, Sarah Neelon, Wayne Perrea and Beth Martin*

## CLOTHES CLOSET JUNE DATES

**Wednesdays, 10th and 24th, 11:00-3:30.  
Saturdays. 13th and 27th. 10:00-12:00.**

## 2026 DEANE JONES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Deane Jones Memorial Award Committee through Trinity Church has announced that Camryn K. Thompson is the 2026 recipient of the Deane Jones Memorial Award in the amount of \$1,000.00, an award given to a graduating high school senior who is affiliated with one of the churches in Buckland, Shelburne or Colrain and "noteworthy for service to school and community, as well as for good character particularly as demonstrated through dependability, loyalty, leadership and good scholarship".

## TRINITY CHURCH LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A few months after I arrived at Trinity, in late 2024, Lois Bascom approached me about the idea of Trinity Church having an official Land Acknowledgement. That fall, her and I participated in a book study on *Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future* by Patty Krawec that was hosted by the Woodlands Partnership and led by Rhonda Anderson. We learned a lot in that book study and knew that crafting a land acknowledgement would require a lot of care and discernment.

Over the following year, Lois and I found resources, met with each other, and drafted language to bring to the congregation. During that time, I continued to be inspired and illuminated by the works of Robin Wall Kimmerer and the preparations that went into *Confluence*, our Earth Day event that we hosted in collaboration with Beloved Community of Battleboro and local Abenaki leaders. We hosted two coffee-hour chats with all of you to receive your input and gather your questions, and then we met with Rhonda Anderson, who generously offered us her time and passion to encourage us to dig deeper and tell the truth that has been ignored for centuries.

After a final round of revisions, we presented the statement below to the congregation on Earth Day Sunday, April 26, 2026. With your affirmation, the Leadership Team voted to accept the Land Acknowledgement at our May 2026 meeting with the intent of making a motion to incorporate it into our bylaws at our next annual meeting.

I want to thank everyone who participated in this process for asking difficult questions, for giving this the weight and time that it deserves, and for seeking to be the people reflected in this statement. And I want to especially thank Lois, for setting this in motion, for being brave enough to slow the process down, and for being resilient enough to keep moving it forward.

While these are the words that we have accepted today, they continue, like all of us, to be a work in progress. May that work and God's grace guide us to become kin once more.

- Pastor Ben

## Trinity Church Land Acknowledgment

April 26, 2026

We begin by acknowledging a difficult truth: long before those of us who are settlers, or descendants of settlers, arrived on this land, there were people here. We speak this with pain because we recognize that we've inherited a history of warfare, genocide, and a deliberate process of erasure and dispossession.

The land we now call Shelburne Falls is the traditional, unceded territory of the Pocumtuck Peoples. While that history is marked by dispossession, we also recognize the living presence of the Nipmuc, Abenaki, and Mohican communities who continue to be in relationship with this land and all the life this land sustains.

As people of God, we must face the reality that we worship on land that was taken. We acknowledge that for many, the intersection of faith and colonization is a source of deep pain. To be people of Love, Truth, and Reconciliation, we cannot simply offer words; we must seek to repair harm and promote a peace rooted in justice.

The people of Trinity Church strive toward true kinship by honoring the agency and leadership of the Indigenous voices in our area today, by better respecting the land and creatures with whom we live, and by committing ourselves to supporting local Indigenous organizations and initiatives. In the spirit of Christ, we commit ourselves to this ongoing work of truth-telling and restoration.

### BUILDING JOY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF

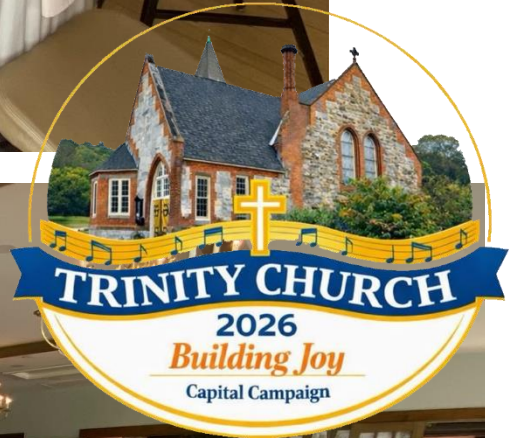
Trinity Church's Building Joy Capital Campaign Kick-Off Celebration on Sunday May 31st at the Shelburne Falls Pub and Brew was a Smashing Success! How incredibly exciting it was to see the money numbers jump from \$61,000 to the grand finale of over \$196,000! As Co-Chairs of this campaign, we wish to express our deepest gratitude to everyone involved in making this event truly amazing as well as to all those involved in helping to achieve this first incredible milestone. We extend a Huge Thank you to each of the donors of the early pledges, adding up to nearly 75% of our final goal. The Capital Campaign Executive Committee has been working tirelessly for months on the many pieces of the early campaign, too many to mention here, however your contributions have been invaluable.

The Kick-Off Committee worked with Laurie Willis at the Pub to make the room shine with our theme colors and developed a menu that the staff of the restaurant made into a delicious Brunch Buffett. We all enjoyed the recording of Keith playing his beautiful music on our historic organ throughout the meal. We are very grateful to Ginny Ray for developing the informative and beautiful slide show that we presented. Many thanks as well to Jennifer Williams, our Campaign consultant for her expert leadership thus far. Finally, we want to sincerely thank Pastor Ben for incorporating so much about the importance of each of the "Pillars" of this campaign into his beloved sermons.

We have crossed over the "kick off" bridge of this campaign and look forward to continuing to work together with you, our Trinity Family, and with our wonderful community of friends and neighbors, to bring our Building Joy Capital Campaign to fulfillment!

With Joyful Blessings, *Clare Chapman and Beth Martin*

**BUILDING JOY BRUNCH PHOTOS**





**PASTOR BEN READING TO THE PLAYGROUP**



**TRINITY CHURCH**  
**LOVES YOU**  
*Happy Pride Month*

## BILL MCKIBBEN SPEAKS WITH NEW ENGLAND METHODISTS

*From by [umcjnews](#) | Jun 1, 2026; written by Rev. Richenda Fairhurst*

Many United Methodist Conferences now have active creation care teams. The team in the New England Annual Conference, the New England Creation Care Circle, is among the first such teams, and members are active in local churches and with conference leadership. They also have a team specific to organizing a virtual Creation Care Café. The café meets every fourth Tuesday, at 7pm Eastern.

This month the internationally known New Englander, Bill McKibben, joined the Cafe for a presentation and Q&A. Many United Methodists know that Bill McKibben is himself a United Methodist layperson who sometimes teaches Sunday School, will occasionally take the pulpit, and believes in the miracle of energy from the sun.

Grace Pugh Hubbard serves as the Caretaker of God’s Creation for the New England Conference. She leads the conference Creation Care Circle, providing support to local churches, team members, and the conference staff.

“Bill McKibben is not only an international figure, but he’s from New England, growing up in Lexington, Massachusetts, and now residing in the Green Mountains of Vermont,” said Pugh Hubbard. “We are anxious to learn more about Creation Care and Climate Justice and having Bill speak in this localized space gave us a shot in the arm for continuing the good work.”

Pugh Hubbard gives a shout out to the Circle and Cafe team, also, for thinking “big” during a session of “bold dreaming.” She celebrates that effort and hopes it will encourage other conference teams across the greater church to be bold as well. She credits Rev. Ben Durfee and Rev. Kim Hornung-Marcy for leading the dreaming and invitation.

McKibben shared a homey and invitational talk from the driver’s seat of his car, as organizers often do in between in-person meetings and engagements—his next stop in California. His focus was to talk about “the situation that we are in, which is not particularly good, then talk about the ways that suddenly are opening up out of that situation.”

McKibben began by sharing the constancy of scientific understanding of climate change, and the work he himself has been doing “for the better part of 40 years.” The science is consistent, but not perfect, with the unfortunate truth that even as the impacts of burning fossil fuels are and have been known and observable since the 1980s, the negative impacts are unfortunately happening faster than they were predicted.

“The last three years” says McKibben, were “the hottest years in human history. Those records are going to be broken this year and next year.” He shares a sense of urgency as he refers to the coming El Niño extreme weather pattern “that’s going to break over our heads beginning this summer and will take temperatures on this planet to places they have never been in human history.”

He also speaks to the human toll of these climactic changes, a toll McKibben refers to as a bleak “moral math.” Saying, “there are millions on millions of people displaced around the world. The

biggest impacts come in the poorest places” and are visited on those “who have done the least to cause this problem.”

He makes note of the global nature of these impacts, speaking first to the floods two years ago in Vermont, memorable to those attending the talk. He juxtaposes that lived experience with the simultaneous and devastating flooding in North Africa. “The rains opened up in North Africa and they had the biggest rainstorms of their history.” The flooding caused a dam in Libya to burst, which took the lives of thousands downstream. “When we see things like that, we are reminded of what a justice issue this is, the biggest justice issue of all time.” When it comes to culpability, the reality is that Africans are responsible for only about 3% of the additional greenhouse gasses that are in the atmosphere.

The problem extends to the very workings of the planet, including the Gulf Stream. The Gulf Stream is an enormous band of water that moves through the world’s oceans. It is an engine that helps distribute the warmth of the equator toward the poles, thereby bringing temperate weather into places like New England. This essential planetary activity is now in danger of collapse.

“We have very little time to deal with these problems,” says McKibben. Yet, there is good news, too: “There is much to be worth fighting for.”

This fight is finally taking off, and fast. “There is one big good thing happening on planet earth,” said McKibben. “The very rapid rise, very rapid, over the last 36 or 40 months in clean energy around the planet.” Solar and wind energy are “alternative no longer.”

McKibben offers a lot of examples. Over the last year, 95% of all new installed power was solar or wind generated. Huge gains in renewable power are taking place in Africa, China, Pakistan, California, Texas, and Vatican City. This, says McKibben, is only bad news if you own an oil well or a coal mine.

He closed his talk by mentioning the actions people can take. In addition to transitioning their own power use to renewable power, perhaps through something like balcony solar, people can make a difference by joining advocacy groups such as 350.org and Third Act. Both organizations have faith working groups, including Third Act Faith. If there is one single take-a-way McKibben seems to want to share from the Tuesday night conversation it is that solar power is “the great gift that we’ve been given.” He asserts that we can and must “make extraordinary changes,” and that the sun “can provide us with all the energy that we could ever need.”

Pugh Hubbard shared her thanks on Tuesday, as well as her hopes in follow up to the Creation Care Cafe. “I hope that Bill’s words will give us a strong shake to realize that time is of the essence if we want to leave a world for our children.” The reality is our children are growing up in a time of great change. “Our local context is one of yearly flooding, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and loss of estuary/swamp land which is critical for carbon sequestration. Bill spoke to many global issues and his sheer genius was beautiful and awe-ing to witness. We’re so very thankful that he shared his incredible knowledge and his loving heart for the future of our planet.”

[View a recording of the May 26, 2026 Creation Care Café](#)

|                               |
|-------------------------------|
| <b>CALENDAR FOR JUNE 2026</b> |
|-------------------------------|

|               |    |  |
|---------------|----|--|
| Monday        | 1  | 9:30 Playgroup   |
| Tuesday       | 2  |  |
| Wednesday     | 3  | 9:30 Playgroup; Climate Chorus (7-8:30 pm)                     |
| Thursday      | 4  | 7 pm AA  |
| Friday        | 5  | 10:30 am Kids Movement; Farmers Market; 5:30 pm Community Meal |
| Saturday      | 6  |  |
| <b>Sunday</b> | 7  | 10 am service  |
| Monday        | 8  | 9:30 Playgroup   |
| Tuesday       | 9  |  |
| Wednesday     | 10 | 9:30 Playgroup; 11 am - 3:30 pm Clothes Closet                 |
| Thursday      | 11 | 11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA                      |
| Friday        | 12 | 10:30 am Kids Movement; Farmers Market; 5:30 pm Community Meal |
| Saturday      | 13 | 10 am - 12 pm Clothes Closet                                   |
| Sunday        | 14 | 10 am service; 12:00 pm Creation Walk                          |
| Monday        | 15 | 9:30 Playgroup   |
| Tuesday       | 16 |  |
| Wednesday     | 17 | 9:30 Playgroup   |
| Thursday      | 18 | 11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA                      |
| Friday        | 19 | 10:30 am Kids Movement; Farmers Market; 5:30 pm Community Meal |
| Saturday      | 20 |  |
| Sunday        | 21 | 10 am service  |
| Monday        | 22 | 9:30 Playgroup   |
| Tuesday       | 23 |  |
| Wednesday     | 24 | 9:30 Playgroup; 11 am - 3:30 pm Clothes Closet                 |
| Thursday      | 25 | 11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA                      |
| Friday        | 26 | 10:30 am Kids Movement; Farmers Market; 5:30 pm Community Meal |
| Saturday      | 27 | 10 am - 12 pm Clothes Closet                                   |
| Sunday        | 28 | 10 am service  |
| Monday        | 29 | 9:30 Playgroup   |
| Tuesday       | 30 |  |

# The Quest

| LECTIONARY FOR JUNE 2026 |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| June 7                   | Genesis 12:1-9; Psalm 33:1-12; Romans 4:13-25; Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26                 |
| June 14                  | Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7); Psalm 116:1, 10-17; Romans 5:1-8; Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-23) |
| June 21                  | Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17; Romans 6:1b-11; Matthew 10:24-39              |
| June 28                  | Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42                          |

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