

The Communicator!

A Publication of Trinity United Church

41 Market St.N., Smiths Falls, ON

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MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM MINISTER

“Scrooge, Snoopy, Shepherds and God”

The coloured lights marked the top rail of the fence in front of a rural property. The coloured lights were a welcome sight in the late afternoon as we go deeper into the darkness of this new daylight time. A bit too soon you say?

A bit too soon for holiday shows on television or in the community? Television has been showing holiday specials for a few weeks now. A friend told me that Christmas would not be complete without watching his favourite, Alistair Sim in *Christmas Carol*. The list is endless, from *Miracle on 34th Street*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, to *Snoopy's Christmas*. Christmas and Advent are filled with secular and sacred, reindeer mixing with angels, shepherds with Santa Claus, elves with evangelism, *Messiah with Rockin' Round the Christmas Tree*. So many themes gather momentum during the holiday season.

Even the themes of church plays appear to blend the narratives of Jesus' birth, which one reads only in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Matthew's narrative begins with a genealogy which lets the reader know that Jesus descended from David, but also from Abraham. Hence, the argument is being made that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah for the Hebrews as

well as for all humankind. Joseph, the main actor for Matthew, plans to legally dismiss the pregnant young Mary to whom he is betrothed, but his fears are quieted by the angel of the Lord. Jesus is born in Bethlehem, visited by wise men, popularly seen as three, but not so numbered in the narrative. Joseph then takes the family to safety to Egypt, returning to Israel only after evil King Herod dies some years later.

Luke's gospel talks nothing about wise visitors, gifts or trips to Egypt. In Luke, the birth of Jesus takes place in a stable, or manger, and the visitors are local shepherds. At the beginning of this narrative great emphasis is placed on the pious Jewish characters, priest Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth, and on Mary who has found favour with God and will conceive a son. These three characters alternately are speechless, sing songs of praise and prophesy. Mary's words are written on the hearts of many faithful, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." (Luke 1:38) Joseph's bit part has him dutifully taking pregnant Mary with him to Bethlehem for the census, with no mention of divorce or responsibility for the pregnancy. The rough and tumble shepherds are the first to hear about the birth. And at his

temple presentation, Jesus is met by the aged, devout Simeon and the aged prophet Anna, who lived most of her life in the temple. It seems important to Luke that Jesus was born and raised in a family of observant and pious Jews.

In observing the birth of Jesus, Christians blend these narratives, finding some selections useful while neglecting others. A careful reading and exploration of the texts invites an appreciation of different themes, and more broadly, an appreciation of religious traditions and cultures different than our own. "Peace on earth and justice for all will only become reality when enough sons and daughters awaken to the divine design that has made each of us in the Creator's image." (Edward Hays) May that be our prayer this Advent and Christmas, and "Here am I" servanthood for the New Year.



REPORT FROM COUNCIL

I would like to thank the Transition Team for all their hard work to get us this far and closer to calling for a new minister. They have done an excellent job.

I was saddened by the resignation of our wonderful music director John Wanless after leading our wonderful choir for so many years.

The church's Candy Cane Bazaar brought in approximately \$3,400. Thanks to all the help from our wonderful church ladies and men and people from the community that supported our church.

We also have to repair the church's leaking roof on the east side of the building.

Thanks to all the people who have helped and installed for our church a Defibrillator. Thanks to Bud Fawcett and Ron Stronski who will help to look after it in the future.

Laurie Duncan
Council Chair

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

The resignation of Shelley Doucet as Chair prompted the Nomination Team to fill the vacancy. Jan Montgomery will act as Chair until a candidate is found.

Following John Wanless' resignation, we are pleased to have music leadership supplied by Madelyn Piehl on Dec. 4 and Peter Brown for the remainder of the month including the Christmas Eve traditional

Service. John's last day was be Sunday, November 27, 2016 (Advent 1).

Sunday, Dec. 4 will be White Gift Service.

Sunday, Dec. 11 we will have a guest speaker, Rev. Tokouhi Dermirdjian-Petro (Author of *The True Gift Lives On – Christmas Poetry, Prayers and Blessings* and currently serving as United Church Minister at Elgin - Portland charge).

Sunday, Dec. 18 will be the Children's drama presentation.

Christmas Eve services will be Saturday, Dec. 24th at 4:30 (Children's Service), 7:30 (Traditional) and 9:30 pm. (Meditation and Communion) **Note: earlier time.**

We are invited to join with Westminster for Dec. 25th, and **will be** having a joint service with Westminster on Sunday, January 1st at Trinity.

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2017

In keeping with policy contained in UC publication *Faithful Footsteps: Duty of Care*, it was decided that Children's Ministry teachers will provide a Police Check – Vulnerable Sector. (currently Heidi Peskett and Jana Plaunt).

St. Paul's UC has contracted a Youth Coordinator for 8 hours/week. There was some discussion around partnering with them and/or other churches for such a person.

We reviewed and discussed the budget submissions for the Team including a Narrative Budget aligning with our Living Mission, Vision and Core Values. A motion to accept the budget as amended was approved.

Christian Education opportunities: Bible Study Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. and for January 2017 United Church – Hindu Relations Study

Two youth attended the Bay of Quinte Youth Conference Event in Bowmanville the weekend of November 18 – 20, 2016 – Keelan Wrightly and Owen Wrightly.

Christmas Blessings to all,

Jan Montgomery, Acting Chair

UCW REPORT

*"MAY THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS BRING YOU PEACE
THE GLADNESS OF CHRISTMAS GIVE YOU HOPE
AND THE WARMTH OF CHRISTMAS GRANT YOU LOVE"*

UCW has had a very busy Fall. This year we made 938 apple pies, 120 jars of jelly which are all sold, clearing approximately \$5000. On Nov.5, we held a very successful Bazaar and cleared approximately \$3400. Great work ladies and many "thanks" to all who helped in any way. Special thanks to the planning team; Arlie, Linda and Cynthia. Several of our ladies attended Four Rivers Presbyterial Fall Rally at Wall St. United in Brockville on Sept. 25th. Everyone enjoyed

the day. Due to a lot of illness, only a few ladies were able to attend Mid Week in Wooler. We encourage all ladies to attend these gatherings as there are always interesting speakers, worship and music as well as fellowship with old friends.

Our Christmas Potluck supper is Dec.7 at 6PM. We will be joined by guests from St. Pauls United and Bethel United. Bring a friend and enjoy good food, a worship program, carol singing and great fellowship. Don't miss it!

We are always grateful for the many ways you support your UCW.

May the coming season bring peace to your home and joy to your heart.

**WISHING YOU A BLESSED CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Marguerite Cameron
UCW President



Men's Breakfast Club

We meet on the 2nd Thursday each month at 8:00 am at the Roosteraunt for breakfast. Fellowship and Discussion – topics vary. All men are welcome from age 25 to 95.

At our last session (sparsely attended due to hunting season), we had a free-wheeling discussion about many things at Trinity from bulletins, communications, to ministry, music, transition period and the future. There were no hurt feelings or antagonism for we are all friends, supportive of one another even if we do not agree on all items.

Trinity has challenges (some of our own making) and opportunities. We need to be positive and move forward to avoid being trumped. We left feeling recharged and optimistic about our universe and church family.

Come join us and get your 2 cents in.

Tom Foulkes

The History of Flanders Fields

In the Sunday service of Nov. 6, we remembered the soldiers from our congregation who were killed in action in World War I (9), World War II (12) and the Korean War (1). Doug Kilpatrick also shared with us the well-known "In Flanders Fields" poem, and presented the following historical background prior to his reading. The editorial group wishes to share this with you.

A few months more than one hundred and one years ago, Lt. Col. John McCrae wrote his enduring poem IN FLANDERS FIELDS during the First World War, in the spring of 1915.

On the twenty-second of April, 1915, the German Army attacked the Allied line in the vicinity of the city of Ypres, the Flanders region of Belgium. This was the beginning of the Second Battle of Ypres.

For the first time in the history of warfare, the German Army made extensive use of poison gas in the attack. Allied soldiers had no defense against the gas. Off the flank of the Canadians, the Allied line broke, but the Canadians held and were able to help close the gap.

The cost was terrible. Over eleven days, Canadian casualties, wounded, missing and killed, were more than five and a half thousand, of whom fatal casualties were almost two thousand. Among the names on the Smiths Falls cenotaph are the names of four young men from Smiths Falls whose lives were taken in that battle.

During the battle, John McCrae served as a Canadian Army Field Surgeon in an Advanced Dressing Station.

In the aftermath of the battle, and in the aftermath of the death of a good friend killed in action, McCrae wrote words for those soldiers who could no longer speak for themselves. He wrote:



In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae (1872-1918)

Message from Treasurer

I continue to be impressed by the Trinity Congregation. As we approach the end of the year the deficit in the general fund is lower than expected and should be erased. This in spite of financial challenges in the Town and a decrease in contributors. However we cannot be too complacent because by the end of the year we must repay the \$12,000.00 loan from the trustees. I ask you to consider your end of year contributions as you are able.

Your continuing support at Trinity enables the church in its programming and reaching out to the wider community.

Merry Christmas to all.

Arnel W. Pattemore, Trinity Treasurer

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The Board of Trustees held its most recent meeting on November 24, 2016. Here is an update:

Financial Report

The total Balance of “Funds Held in Trust” as of October 31, 2016 is \$200,602.53.

There have been no deposits since the last report plus 10 cents interest on the savings account. Disbursements since the last report to you from “Funds in Trust” were bank charges totaling \$4.00. So the bank balance as of October 31, 2016 is \$5,458.26.

A Summary of Investments as of October 31, 2016 is as follows:

- The Trustee’s Investment Savings Account at Scotia Bank is \$5,458.26;
- The balance in Trinity’s BMO Wealth Management Investment Portfolio is \$175,144.27; and
- There is the \$20,000.00 investment in of Trinity’s Gift Card Program.... for a total balance in “Funds Held in Trust of \$200,602.53.

Investing Funds in Trust

As a reminder, in late 2014, we engaged BMO-Nesbitt Burns (The Graham-Dixon Group) in Perth to provide professional advice and investment portfolio management to assist in executing our investment responsibilities. The investment strategy is to help rebuild our Funds in Trust and to provide annual income for the use of the Church, while protecting our principle

investment. Our investment strategy was reviewed in May 2016 and we agreed that this is not the time to alter our investment portfolio which is made up of GICs, a Bond Fund, an Equity Fund and a Dividend Fund. On November 24, 2016, Trustees met with Derrick Dixon of The Graham-Dixon Group to review our current portfolio and to receive a prospectus on the investment future moving into 2017 and 2018. Trustees will meet again with Mr. Dixon in mid-December 2016 to finalize any investment strategy and portfolio shifts going into 2017.

Legacy (Planned) Giving

The Trustees have been advised that another bequest has been made to Trinity.

We will report the details to you once the bequest has been received. We are most grateful for all gifts that are provided to the church to help us do God’s work with our congregation, community and beyond.

As a reminder Trinity’s Legacy Giving Program offers a variety of ways that members, adherents and friends of Trinity can make a gift to assist in sustaining the future of Trinity. Information as to the various ways that you can participate in the Legacy Giving Program, and the potential benefits are may be available to you as a donor, are available at the church.

Respectfully Submitted
Robert D. Swan
Chairman,
Board of Trustees

Stewardship Report

The stewardship program is moving along quite well. Soon we will be at the end of the year and we have accomplished several items that were on our agenda.

- We had a very successful geranium sale.
- Our new defibrillator was purchased and installed with thanks to everyone who helped in any way. It took a long time to get the job completed. If you have not noticed, it is in the stairway in the vestibule, accessible to everyone.
- Also thanks for the installation of new toilets in the church.

We are currently working on a new project for the new year and are sure it will open the door to many things . Please see "Salt and Light" article below.

Sending an early blessing for our upcoming Christmas Season.

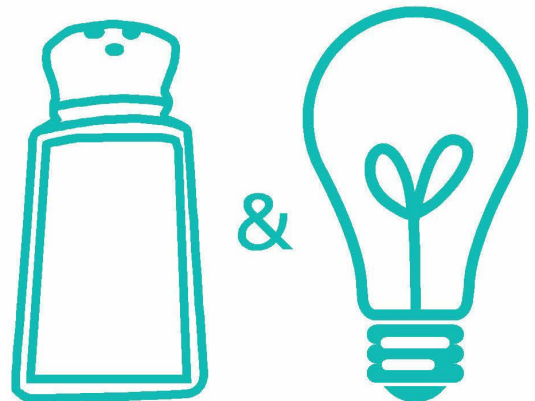
June Pevere, Chairperson

SALT & LIGHT **ANNUAL MINISTRY PLAN 2017**

In our worship we regularly say what it is we believe. It is our New Creed. In it we are called to follow in the way of Jesus as individuals, families, congregations, and a

denomination. I respond to this call and give to the ministry of Trinity United Church because "I want to ensure that children and youth have the same Christian education as I had when I grew up."

Over the five weeks of January 15 to February 12, 2017, Trinity United will focus on how we are salt and light in the world. We will share more stories about why we give; how our generosity makes a difference here at Trinity United Church; how we affect the community around us; and how, through the Mission & Service Fund of the United Church, we respond to this call nationally and globally.



Matthew 5:13-16a

*Living Thankfully
Day by Day*

SALT & LIGHT is the theme of our worship and learning opportunities for all ages. Our children will be learning about being Salt & Light in Sunday School! Also, we will invite everyone to participate as YOU are able in ensuring through time, talent and treasure, we can grow the ministries at Trinity United Church.

SALT & LIGHT is going to be an inspiring experience. Trinity joins other congregations who have or are using this program, and who have found that it has inspired them to greater service. Listen for your own call, and respond with generosity. Together we are SALT & LIGHT as we seek to CONNECT, INSPIRE and SERVE at Trinity United Church!

Watch for your letter of introduction from the Stewardship Team!

TRANSITION TEAM REPORT

It has been a very busy two months since the Transition Team last reported to you through the Thanksgiving Communicator. Here is what has happened:

A Congregational Day of Discovery – “Envisioning our Future” – September 25, 2016 - The Transition Team prepared a final Congregational Day of Discovery to

“Envision our Future”. What is God calling us to do? The event was held following Women’s Sunday worship service and Potluck Finger Food Luncheon. The results of the workshop are published in the Transition Team Newsletter # 8 - October 9, 2016 and are available through the church office and on the Trinity website.

Transition Team Report to Trinity Church Council - October 18, 2016 – The Transition Team presented its progress report and recommendations to Church Council. The report and recommendations were accepted and were presented at a Special Congregational meeting on November 13, 2016. The Transition Team Report and the motions were made available to the Congregation through the Transition Team Newsletter # 10 dated Nov. 6, 2016.

Trinity Special Congregational Meeting – Nov. 13, 2016 – was held prior to the Sunday morning worship service. The congregation passed the following five motions:

- That the congregation accepts the report of the Transition Team dated October 18, 2016.
- That the congregation transmit the Report of the Transition Team to Pastoral Relations of Four Rivers Presbytery for review, and request that a vacancy for one full-time ministry personnel position be declared for July 1, 2017.

- That the Transition Team be authorized to coordinate and complete the required forms and profiles as directed in Handbook: Declaring/Changing Ministry Positions which include The Mission and Ministry Profile, the Financial and Demographic Profile and the Ministry Personnel Personal description position, naming the Interview Team and present the completed information to Church Council, the congregation and Presbytery for approval.
- That the congregation affirms Church Council's adoption of the Living Mission, Vision Statement, Core Values Statement and Tag line (Motto) of Trinity United Church dated 18 October 2016.
- That the congregation covenants with itself and with leadership for ensuring that the changes and decisions made during the Interim Ministry are carried forward into the new phase of mission and ministry.

The Transition Team Newsletter # 11 dated November 20, 2016 provided details about the work to be completed between November 13, and December 16, 2016.

Four Rivers Presbytery Meeting - November 22, 2016 - Trinity's Transition Team report was dispatched to the Four Rivers Presbytery Pastoral Relations Chairperson and will be considered at their meeting on November 22, 2016.

Next Steps - Declaring/Changing Ministry Positions – Discerning our Ministry Needs

By the time you receive this **Communicator** and in anticipation that Four Rivers Presbytery will approve Trinity's Transition Report, work has already begun to prepare the documents required to declare Trinity's Ministry Position Vacant. Here is the "guiding" time table for completing this work:

November 20, 2016

- Transition Team Newsletter # 11 distributed to the congregation;
- Distribution of Trinity's Ministry and Mission Workbooks to congregation via paper copy, email and website

November 28, 2016

- **Deadline** for all completed Workbooks to be returned to the Transition Team

December 3, 2016

- **Congregational Workshop** to Review, Rank the Ministry and Mission Priorities

December 9, 2016

- **Deadline** for completion of the Mission and Ministry Profiles;
- **Deadline** to complete the Demographics and Financial Profiles;
- **Deadline** for nominations to Interview Team

December 16, 2016

- **Deadline** to Complete the Position Description;
- Transition Team makes Recommendation of Interview Team members

January 3, 2017

- Council considers and approves the documentation submitted by the Transition Team and calls a congregational meeting to approve the documentation submitted by the Transition Team. The Request to Declare/Change the Trinity Ministry Position form is prepared for submission to Four Rivers Presbytery.

January 8, 2017

- Special Congregational Meeting on work approved by the Council and naming of Interview Team.
Note this meeting is called and chaired by Presbytery.

January 10, 2017

- Material finalized and submitted to Presbytery

January 17, 2017

- Presbytery Executive Meeting

NEW LIVING MISSION STATEMENT

Trinity United Church is a Christian community that explores and shares its faith in open-minded dialogue. Living out the love of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ, we grow spiritually as we connect with, inspire and serve our community and beyond.

VISION STATEMENT

On our Journey of faith we will;

- Become more intentional in living out our living mission and core values; we will “walk the talk”.
- Embrace changes and take risks to live by our Living Mission.
- Practise stewardship of all resources.

- Ensure that God’s house is open, accessible and sustained.
- Foster communication between Church Council, its teams, the congregation and the greater community.
- Provide ongoing faith development opportunities for all ages.
- Encourage, equip and empower individuals and groups for shared leadership.
- Invite the participation of all in our church programs and activities.

CORE VALUES STATEMENT

Guided by the Spirit, mindful of our roots, we are a community of faith, called to celebrate the Christian gospel by practising:

- **“Holy Manners”**
- **Inclusion**
- **Pastoral Care**
- *Hospitality*
- *Community Service*
- *Justice-making*
- *Open-minded exploration*
- *Transparency & Accountability*
- *Whole World Ecumenism*
- *Stewardship, and*
- *Life-long learning*

to bring about continuous transformation and renewal.

CHURCH MOTTO :

“CONNECT ~ INSPIRE ~ SERVE”

Thanks to all those who are participating in the Transition Process as we move along this journey together!

Submitted by Bob Swan & Diane Bennett, Co-chairs, Trinity Transition Team

*Announcements of this workshop
in Sunday Services recently*

**A CONGREGATIONAL WORKSHOP
TO REVIEW AND RANK MISSION AND MINISTRY**
Trinity Church Hall - Dec. 3, 2016 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Members of the congregation are invited to participate in this workshop to review the ministry needs identified through the work of the transition process and the workbooks “Describing Trinity’s Mission and Ministry” that will be submitted by members of the congregation.

Once that review has been completed (we are allocating two hours for this process)... we will break for light lunch (please bring your own bagged lunch, tea/coffee will be provided) and then return to rank... in Priority... the seven Mission and Ministry Categories identified in the workbook “Describing Ministry Needs”. We are allocating two (2) hours for this activity.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would sign up for the workshop so we can better plan resource requirements for the event. A sign-up sheet is available in the foyer or email Transition Team Secretary nwrightly@gmail.com

Diane Bennett

Hurricane Matthew Emergency Appeal-FAQ

Is The United Church of Canada responding to the humanitarian crisis caused by Hurricane Matthew in Haiti and surrounding countries?

Yes. As a church we are called to be one body, and to care for the whole. Our faith teaches us to care for the most vulnerable members of society. Matthew 25:40 reminds us: “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me”. The United Church lives out faith and witness in the world, steadfast in the belief that every individual must be cherished and included.

The United Church is working with Mission & Service partners on the ground. Some relief is already being distributed, and needs are being assessed.

The United Church of Canada has a long history of responding with faithful compassion.

Will The United Church of Canada accept donations for Hurricane Matthew relief?

Yes. The United Church has launched a formal appeal.

What will happen to my money? Will it reach those who need it in Haiti and surrounding countries?

Yes. The United Church works with local partners who have well-established and trusted distribution networks on the ground, including in remote and marginalized communities

Does the United Church take an administrative fee off my donation?

No. One hundred percent of your donation is used for emergency response: 85 percent of your donation goes toward on-the-ground work and 15 percent is held to ensure the United Church has the financial means to immediately respond to emerging humanitarian crises, without waiting for donations to arrive. The Mission & Service fund covers the cost of staffing and other administrative expenses.

Can my congregation give money to the Hurricane Matthew Emergency Appeal?

Yes. Your congregation can give money designated for the Hurricane Matthew Emergency Appeal.

Can I get an income tax receipt? Yes.