



TRINITY BELLS

*A Publication of Trinity United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
4435 North Calhoun Road, Brookfield, WI 53005*

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December 2020

Out On the Way

by Pastor Susan Stull-Carr

We just cancelled our Thanksgiving and Christmas plans with our families. The whole thing feels unthinkable. How can we not be together on these special 'holy-days'? After all, of all the things that seem most important to us, family most often ranks the highest. It's easy to fall into a kind of despair or even anger at this turn of events and the pandemic that causes us to even consider shutting down family time.

We've now entered the ninth month of this new routine. We are getting impatient for it to end; tired of the disconnection; frustrated with one more thing we can't do as we normally would do. We're weary of the separations and the joys of ordinary things we took for granted. Simply put....we're done!

Few of us have ever really entered this season of Advent in the way it is meant to be entered. We entered busy and full of plans for Christmas – the presents, the baking, the entertaining, the decorating. We weren't really waiting for anything...we were full of our own plans.

But on that first Christmas, the people had been waiting – for over 400 years, from some word from God. Their lives for many years, had been one of suffering and struggling and slowly coming to accept that they could not force God's blessing, but had to wait. I think of all the people around the world who are waiting for peace, for a sign of hope, for a word of love, a moment of joy; people who have been waiting and waiting and waiting, in the midst of famine, war, poverty, oppression. We are a world waiting. And sometimes, we get weary.

Advent in the life of the church was a way to bring meaning to these times of waiting – and to find in the waiting, new gifts of hope and joy.



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TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

4435 North Calhoun Road
Brookfield, WI, 53005
262-781-9378

Email: contact@trinitybrookfield.org

Web Site: www.trinitybrookfield.org

Office Hours

Monday-Wednesday: 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

Thursday: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Virtual Sunday Worship

Worship: 10:00 am

Fellowship Hour: Follows service

(During in-person worship)

Holy Communion: First Sunday of the Month
(unless noted otherwise)

Sunday School Via Zoom

Jill Gretenhart and Robin Komassa teach students from Pre-K through 7th Grade. If you are interested in having your children participate or if you have questions, contact Kathy Haass at KatydidHaass@gmail.com or Jill Gretenhart at [yippeeefun@aol.com](mailto:yippeefun@aol.com). Lessons for the upcoming week are sent via email in addition to the Zoom link. Class begins at 9:15 am for 30 to 45 minutes.

Open to the Community

Virtual Worship, Sunday 10:00 am

On Hold: Boy Scout Troop 21

On Hold: Game Nights

On Hold: Quilters

Staff & Lay Leaders

Interim Pastor: Rev. Susan Stull-Carr

Council President: Terri Allen

Director of Music: Mike Hetzel

Administrative Assistant: Marie Furrer

Cleaning Custodian: Jodie Gerard

Maintenance Custodian: Eric Dahm

Ministers of the Church:

All Members of Trinity United Church of Christ

Newsletter Deadline

The 12th of each month.

Happy Birthday

Christina Matthews

Roberta Stanley

Jeanne Zimmerman

Meghan Dahm

Lola Krainer



HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Beverly Littmann

Geraldine Masch

Marion Wandsneider



Kathryn & Dan Dierbeck

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Out On the Way

Hope was no longer in external things, but in the awareness that we can find God, even in the harshest circumstances; even in the times of great darkness. They learned to look for small moments of joy rather than great moments of ease and happiness. They learned, as Terry Allen wrote, 'to celebrate the holliness of life' even when there is no holly!

It takes a different kind of energy and imagination to remain hopeful in the darkness, and this is what the stories of Advent tell us. Adventus means 'the arrival.' We believe that Jesus 'arrives' many times over and that the second coming is not simply one event, but that Jesus arrives unexpectedly and in the guise of a child, or a servant many times over. Jesus is always arriving, for those who are prepared, those who have done the hard work of staying awake when it was easier to fall back to sleep. Jesus is always arriving if you've learned to walk in the dark by faith and not by sight. God is always sending the light – even if it's only a small glimpse. Not enough to see by, but enough to give us hope.

This year, I'll be speaking about the messages of the angels in the Christmas story and the scriptures. These messages, are central to this time of Advent, for they provide us a star to follow when other things fail us. I am praying that this Advent may become a New Adventure for you – a time to look up and see if you can see a star; to look around and discover hope and joy in small places. The times of waiting are moments to give us time to prepare for the gift that changes everything, the arrival of Jesus to the world.

Pastor Susan



Introduction

Hello Everyone!

My name is Marie and I am thrilled to be Trinity UCC's new Administrative Assistant.

I'm a life-long Waukesha resident, married to my wonderful husband Wally with two grown daughters, one in Texas pursuing her Ph.d in Psychology and the other using her Social Work degree to help children in Madison.

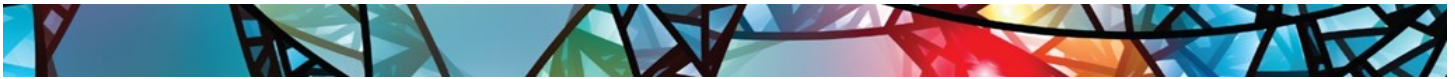
I love to be outside (in the summer), swim and garden, read lots of books and I enjoy Zumba (both Aqua and on land).

My husband and I foster cats and kittens through several organizations, helping them recover from illness/injury, to socialize or just until they grow big and strong and are able to be adopted. We have four of our own adopted kitties - Bernie, Benji, Chloe and Pax.

I look forward to meeting everyone once we are allowed to gather and celebrate together!

A very joyous Christmas to you ALL!





Our Advent and Christmas services will be filled with joy! We invite you to gather with your family, send the video worship to your friends and celebrate the messages of the angels! The word 'angelos' means 'messenger' and it is the angels who bring the first messages from God to earth about this birth in Bethlehem. Come, listen in to those conversations!



First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, November 29

The Heavens Are Telling the Glory of God

Isaiah 6:1-13, Revelation 22:1-7

Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 6

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 13

The Message to Mary and Elizabeth and Celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion

Isaiah 11:1-5, Luke 1: 26-38

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Thursday, December 20

The Message of the Children - Our children and youth spread the word of joy through their Christmas program!

Isaiah 11:6-9, Luke 2:1-7

Christmas Eve

Friday, December 24

The Message to the Shepherds and Lighting of the Christ Candle

Isaiah 52:7-10, Luke 2:8-20

First Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, December 27

Christmas I Lessons and Carols: The Message Comes to Us

A few suggestions: for Communion Sunday, set a table with bread and cup for yourself and those with you; also place a candle on the table during Advent, or if you are lighting your own Advent wreath, light the 3rd candle. (It's easy to make a wreath of some greens and candles – purple and pink or blue and pink!) You'll need 5 candles – one white for the Christ candle. You may also put some decoration on your table that reminds you of the Christ story, a creche, an ornament, a piece of music, the Bible.

For Christmas Eve, I invite you to have candles ready to light as we share the passing of the light! Please make sure they are protected to keep you and yours safe!

On the 27th, or really any Sunday, adding the ringing of some bells to the carols would greatly enhance your joy and laughter!



Mission News

Clothing Collection

The Mission Committee thanks everyone who cleaned out their closets and dresser drawers to share clothing items no longer worn. Your efforts this year made a new record for Trinity! On November 11th, 150 bags of clothes were taken to Hope Center. This congregation is amazing! What a great bunch of people. Thanks to Dave Mielke, Lee Lannan, Bob Lannan, Joe Halvorson and Dan Dierbeck for stuffing their cars and delivering those bags.



Ways to Give

YOU may know by now that we canceled this year's Harvest In-Gathering. In past years we had a food drive that benefited The Food Pantry of Waukesha County to help fill Thanksgiving baskets. This year we'd prefer that you purchase extra items while doing your grocery shopping and leave them in a bin at your store. Fewer hands touching items helps to stop the spread of COVID-19. We recommend these items:

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| canned yams | cream of mushroom soup | French fried onions | canned green beans |
| stuffing | gravy | potato buds | cooking oil |
| flour | sugar | | |

If you prefer, you can send a check or make an on-line donation to the local food pantry of your choice. The Mission Committee recommends:

Food Pantry of Waukesha County
1301 Sentry Dr.
Waukesha, WI 53186
www.waukeshafoodpantry.org

Frieden's Community Pantry
1220 W. Vliet St.
Milwaukee, WI 53205
www.friedenspantry.org

Hunger Task Force
201 S. Hawley Ct
Milwaukee, WI 53214
www.hungertaskforce.org

We are also canceling this year's stuffed toy drive, poinsettia delivery and caroling to our Stay-At-Homes. We all want to be safe for ourselves and for YOU!

Happy Holidays to all!



SPECIAL THANKS.....

In any circumstances, there are ways to be thankful. But sometimes, it's more difficult to be thankful when one is isolated from others and the times are tough. I have been aware for some time now, of how much we are missing each other, how we miss the gifts of being in a shared space, gathering for worship and praise. The smiles, the warm touches, the laughter, the quiet moments for prayer, we are missing them all!

Another thing I've discovered is that we are missing hearing about the hard work of those 'behind the scenes' groups of people who have been carrying the load for a long time now! Without much thanks or appreciation. If we were gathered, we would hear those announcements and share the milestones, but we aren't and we're limited to a couple of minutes about our life and ministry.

BUT....let me ask you to pick up the phone or to send a note to a variety of people who have kept plugging away.

Our **Search Committee** has put in long hours, late nights, reading time, interviewing time and going out of their comfort zone time. They have dealt with disappointments and frustrations and rejection and a lot of wondering if they were up to the task. Our prayers have surrounded them, but they haven't heard our thanks. By the time this arrives in your home, we are prayerful that a new candidate will be ready to be introduced to you.

Our **Property Committee** continues to tend to care of the property and building. The grounds look very nice and cared for, there has been work in the elevator and work that continues to finish the exterior work.

Our **Business and Office Committee** has hired a new administrative assistant, Marie Furrer. Our thanks to them for the interviews and process which brought Marie to Trinity, as well as to their work in the office during the time of transition. A new computer was installed due to the diligence and care of those from Business and Office and Property.

Our **Worship and Arts Committee** has continued to assist in planning worship and working out the details. Our Decorating team has provided beautiful backdrops for worship and our musical/production team has given countless hours to the production of Sunday worship.



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Our **Finance Committee** has continued to count the weekly offerings and plan for cautious stewardship of our resources during this uncertain time.

Our **Christian Nurture and Fellowship Committee** has been providing Christian education over Zoom and while that means many challenges, they have kept persisting! A special children's Christmas service will be held on December 20th.

We give thanks for those on the **Endowment and Memorial Committees**, the **Spiritual Life Committee** for their work during this time.

Our **Council** has also been putting in long hours – much of it at this point administrative, but with Covid's arrival, dreams and plans that require us to be present to each other have been put on hold. Many conversations are going on between the various committees and the Council.

Again, on behalf of Trinity, we lift our voices of gratitude! Please reach out and offer your own personal word of thanks to these tireless 'ministers' and 'servants' of God's love! If I've forgotten anyone (which is usually what happens and why I don't often do this), please let me know. Everyone's service is so deeply appreciated!



The Memorial Committee wishes to thank the anonymous donor who left a cash donation in the Committee's folder in mid-October in memory of Don Wedel. All memorial giving is very appreciated.

Thanks to ALL of you who continue to bring your aluminum and tin cans to Trinity's outdoor recycling area in the back of the church.

In the past couple weeks, I have made two trips to the Recycling Center where they purchase both aluminum and tin cans. This is an important project that Trinity has as we work to keep our "Be the Church" promise to protect the environment.

Please remember the following:

- All tin cans must be rinsed thoroughly
- If possible, remove the labels from the tin cans
- If you are able to crush the aluminum cans that is fine, but if not, that's OK
- Please place tin cans in the tin can recycling bin and the aluminum cans in the special bin for aluminum. This is helpful so that I don't have to sort through them.
- We have placed large garbage bags in each of the recycling bins, so please place your items in these bags or I need to move them to other bags or containers for transport to the Recycling Center.

Thanks again, for continuing this worthwhile project!

Marlene





Emphasis on Holy; less on holly



2020 has been a challenging year for all of us and we all know that those challenges will continue into 2021. Perhaps in the Spring, we can have Sunday worship services in the South Parking Lot and our groups and committees can meet in parks or on our lawn. That is the hope for Trinity. And if we are patient until the pandemic is under control and a vaccine has been distribute, all of us here at Trinity will once again be able to interact face to face as a faith community. Until then, we must do all that we can to stay in touch with one another through cards, phone calls, emails and face time.

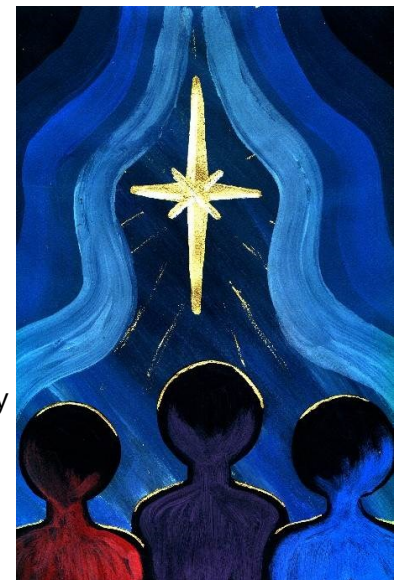
What better time of year to do all of those things than the holidays and the holy season of Advent! We here at Trinity have much to be thankful for. Let us begin to count those blessings. We have roofs and walls to shelter us and keep us warm. We have food to nourish us. There are friends and family to comfort us and whose love we cherish. And we have faith which gives us strength and hope in the future and better days ahead.

Though we have been physically apart from one another, and not able to worship together in our Sanctuary since mid-March, we have found ways around this impediment. We have met during Summer "Wednesdays on the Lawn". We have gathered for Sunday Services "Part II" on the South Parking Lot in late Summer and early Fall where we were able to celebrate communion twice, welcome 4 new members from Calvary into our midst and hold a Confirmation service. Those are blessings.

We should all try to enjoy a different kind of Christmas season, with more of an emphasis on holy and less on holly. We can share our bounty with food pantries or add items to the food barrels at the exits to all of the grocery stores. We can drop off unwrapped toys at the "Toys for Tots" locations at the malls or fire stations. And we can donate the money we ordinarily would spend on entertainment, at this time of year, to charities that are desperately in need of funds to fuel the good work they do. And we can go through those "storage sheds," storage units and garages and put bags together for Good Will, St. Vincent de Paul and other organizations who share our plenty with those who have less. Doing any and all of these things will surely turn into an added Advent blessing.

Stay in touch with one another and reach out when you need to talk. Pray for those who are sick, and the healthcare workers on the front line fighting to make them well and for the emergency responders who go out in all conditions to save and protect. Pray for those who have lost loved ones over these past 9 months and for those who will yet be touched. Pray for our nation that it can heal the rifts and fissures that have surfaced. And find time to do an Advent devotional, bake a pie, wrap a package or write out a card. All of this will help to put you in the right frame of mind this December and make it a truly holy month.

May the solitude of this unusual Advent season allow each of you to hear those beautiful Christmas carols with new insight. May it allow you to enjoy reading those Christmas cards you receive instead of just looking at the signature and then putting them aside as decoration. Make those special phone calls to friends near and far and be able to spend the time really catching up. Not running around for the next four weeks may be the biggest blessing of all because it will force all of us to slow down and truly enjoy this very special time of year. It will allow us to really ponder the mystery and wonder of the Christ child's birth among us. Merry Christmas and here's to a safe and healthy New Year.



Trinity Council