



TRINITY UNITED CHURCH

Smiths Falls, Ontario, Canada

DECEMBER 2011

COMMUNICATOR



www.trinityunitedsf.ca

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE – (Rev. Peter Woods)

The world is ending. The world is beginning. This is the story at the heart of Advent- Bad News all around...and then the Good News of Bethlehem's baby boy. We are tempted to live in the apocalyptic excitement of 2012, and the fear-based politics of race and religion. We are sometimes tempted to simply lose ourselves in shopping and consumption.

Along the way, Jesus' life testifies to us- offering us the challenge of hope. I can't say it as eloquently, or with as much credibility, as our Moderator can...so here are her words of counsel as we face the temptations and the fears of this season. May we be as bold as she invites us to be.

Christmas reminds us to rise to the challenge of hope

By Mardi Tindal

When I imagine the birth of Jesus in a Bethlehem stable, I often picture a midwife by Mary's side, comforting and coaching.

Birth is a risky business. Madeleine L'Engle, the beloved author of young adult fiction like *A Wrinkle in Time*, knew this. In 1973, a time when I was newly married and considering whether it would be responsible to bring children into such a troubled world, she wrote an Advent poem called *The Risk of Birth*. Its arresting first and last lines read, "This is no time for a child to be born. . . . Yet Love still takes the risk of birth."

Clearly the Judea of 2,000 years ago was no time for a child to be born, yet Love took the risk.

Many today might say that this is no time for a child to be born. But guess who's been called to the stable to assist in birthing the Christ? None other than you and me. Other remarkable midwives are already at work — women, men, children and youth who dare to believe in the promise of what's to come. These are the ones who provide comfort and coaching, confident that Love still takes the risk.

The stable holds too many midwives to mention, and yet a few come into focus. This is no time to expect the many elderly members of the United Church Women to be taking on new challenges. Yet there's Lillian Stewart, engaging with other women of Alberta and Northwest Conference in the Child Well-being Initiative, placing a handmade doll on the desk of every member of the Alberta legislature to promote adequate food and housing for the almost 80,000 Albertan children who live in poverty.

This is no time to expect the church to face the challenge of shrinking congregations housed in energy-draining large buildings. Yet when Seaway Valley Presbytery in southeastern Ontario hoped it might find 500 people to discuss new directions, 800 showed up.

This is no time to expect The United Church of Canada to have a vibrant ministry with youth. Yet in all my decades of involvement with youth ministry, from the first national Youth Forum in 1977, I have never seen so much engagement. Last summer's Rendez-vous at the University of Toronto gathered more United Church youth, young adults and leaders in one place than ever before. And in that same summer, the GO Project, a community-based United Church youth mission experience, also continued its growth, involving more youth and reaching out to more neighbours.

This is no time to believe that reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians is possible. Yet Mona and Leonard Alexcee, Tsimshian elders and members of Prince Rupert (B.C.) United, joined with others at the recent National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering in Prince Rupert to testify that new life is possible. Leonard Alexcee spoke of how love enabled him to lay down the heavy baggage of his residential school experience and move forward with respect. The national Truth and Reconciliation Commission invites us all to the birthing of reconciliation wherever we live.

This is no time to believe that the actions of people of faith can make any difference to life-threatening climate and ocean change. Yet wherever the consequences of global warming are felt — whether in floods or in droughts — the church responds and draws attention to the causes of such suffering.

Climate scientists tell me that they count on people of faith to help bring about change. Scientists can provide the knowledge, but facts alone are not enough to motivate new behaviour. They need us to inspire hearts of compassion, so that we will do what is necessary to sustain life.

Midwives to Love gather with me at town halls throughout Canada, bringing their symbols and stories of hope as they take the risk of trying to meet all these challenges. Members of Eden Mills (Ont.) United, for example, are joyfully engaged with their community's goal to become North America's first carbon-neutral community. Their exuberance is the kind we long to see at Christmas.

This month, Canadian church leaders are among the World Council of Churches' delegation to the United Nations climate talks in South Africa. We carry with us a broadly based interfaith call for action on climate change. It's the first time Canadian

faith leaders have made such a common witness. Love still takes the risk.

The United Church has served as midwife to me. As a community of faith, you have helped to birth a deeper hope and love of Christ that is in me today. I am grateful that Love took the risk to break through my doubt, to see babies born and new possibilities of faithfulness emerge. I am grateful to you, midwives of Love.

Mardi Tindal is the 40th moderator of The United Church of Canada

CHURCH COUNCIL – Chair: Bob Swan

Since the last Communicator was circulated, many great initiatives have been taken by your various leadership teams. You will read all about those activities in the individual Team & Committee Reports.

There are several initiatives that I am informing you about:

1. **Sexual Abuse Prevention & Response Policy & Procedures Manual** - The United Church of Canada has updated its policy & procedures regarding the prevention & response to situations of sexual abuse. Your Church Council will be developing an awareness program with respect to this very important matter. You will hear & read more about in the coming months
2. **Violence & Harassment Policies (Procedures, Measures & Programs)** – As a result of the Ontario Government passing into law, Bill 168, which addresses Violence & Harassment in the Workplace, the United Church of Canada has published “Violence & Harassment Policies including Procedures, Measures & Programs” to foster a safe and respectful workplace for all. Council has just received two documents to assist us in developing a program to ensure that the requirements of the Bill 168 & United Church policy are in place. Look for more information on this matter in the next Communicator.
3. **Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability Act and its applicability to Church Congregations** - In 2005 the Government of Ontario enacted an Act regarding “Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability” the direction given in the Act applies to Church Congregations. There are a number of services that must be made to comply with the Act and it is planned to have all of the necessary requirements in place by the Annual Congregational Meeting.

4. **Budget Shortfall** – Currently, it looks like we will run a deficit in our General Funds (GF) for 2011. Church enters November with a shortfall in GF revenue of approximately \$11,000.00. It would be most helpful if you could see your way clear to designate a larger portion of your givens to General Funds... so we can balance the books at the end of the fiscal year.
5. **Need help on Church Leadership Teams** – The call is going out to church members for assistance on the various Church Leadership Teams & the task groups. If you have some time and a talent (you all have talent) we could use your help... on the Spiritual Leadership Team, The Christian Community Team Ministry & Personnel Committee (Barry Mapplebeck), Board of Trustees, Stewardship Team & Church Council. Please contact the Team Leaders for more information.
6. **The Annual Congregational Meeting 2012** will be held on February 26, 2012, in the Church Sanctuary following a short church service. More to follow...

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS FROM .

TRUSTEES – (Chair: Dick Donaldson)

Report highlights from Trustee:

Article by: **Keith Stam, Financial Development Officer**

Bay of Quinte & Manitou Conferences

The United Church of Canada

| *"Now Just Isn't the Right Time"*

"I just don't feel ready to talk about this type of thing," said Diane to her friend, Marlene. "Now just isn't the right time."

Diane was referring to an insert in the Sunday bulletin about creating a legacy gift to the Church. "First of all, I don't like talking about death. And second, Don and I already have wills. They were created several years ago when the kids were young."

"But that's exactly why Darryl and I decided to take a look at ours," responded Marlene. "A lot of things have changed since our kids were little. For one thing, none of them are living at home—all three are out on their own. They don't need an inheritance in quite the same way that they would have when they were young."

“So?” said Diane.

“Well, Darryl saw a book on estate planning at the bookstore and brought it home. As we worked through it together, we realized that our sense of legacy extends beyond family and we want to give something back to the community—to the Church, specifically.

“The Church has helped us in so many ways over the years,” continued Marlene. “We’ve had great ministers; our children have developed strong values for life; and as we’ve matured, it has helped us shape our ideas about what really matters. It has provided the whole family with a great legacy.”

“So as good stewards, it feels good to return the favour.”

“So what did you do?” asked Diane.

“We met with our financial advisor, who agreed that a bequest in our will was the best way to go at this point. We decided that we could treat the Church like one of our children, and split our estate in four ways.”

“We also talked to Paul Sales, the United Church Financial Development Officer in our region. He helped us identify how we want to see our gift used. So it will be split between World Development and Relief and the congregation. And he also gave us the correct wording to put in the will.

“Well, maybe it *is* the right time to think about this after all,” said Diane. “I suppose there’s no harm in getting the information. At least I’ll have an idea of what I want to talk about.”

Establishing a legacy gift for the Church doesn’t have to be complicated. For example, the easiest way is to have a bequest written into your will.

To explore the variety of beneficiaries within the church and for help with wording in your will, contact

Keith Stam -705-876-8670 kstam@united-church.ca

STEWARDSHIP TEAM – (Chair: Fred Haughton)

-Our church now has a new Treasurer in the person of Lawrence Allen. We welcome him to our team. Please see special feature in this issue. We need volunteers to help with the sale of gift cards. A new bulletin board at our entrance way is required. We need volunteers to make this a reality as well. Please contact myself or Karen White if you can help.

-Please see Larry's Bio below.

Meeting the New Treasurer - Lawrence (Larry) Allen



- I love Smiths Falls and have been a strong supporter of it my entire life. I was born here in 1952 and went to school at St Francis Elementary and High School and my last year at SFDCI. Although we lived in the same town, I only met Lorraine at the end of high school. Religion was a big part of both of our lives and we wanted to have our family go to just one church so I joined the United Church in 1974.

We put each other through University by one of us working so the other could go to school. I worked at a number of bookkeeping jobs while Lorraine was getting her teaching degree. I received my Bachelor of Commerce degree from Carleton University and articulated with Comrie,

Blakely and Craig in Morrisburg, later becoming a partner of that firm. It was the love of family and our childhood community that made Lorraine and I return to Smiths Falls to establish my own accounting practice and to raise our 2 boys.

Lorraine and I have always loved heritage properties and fell in love with the big old red brick on 44 Maple, it seemed fitting that it had once been the United Church manse. We have lived there for the last 24 years and I moved my practice there when both boys started school full time. This has proven to be very convenient and allowed Lorraine to go back to teaching full time. I still have an active practice specializing in tax accounting and small business financials.

I am a member of the Rotary Club serving on the executive for a number of terms. I belong to the Chamber of Commerce, Together Smiths Falls and the United Church. I love to dive, collect artifacts (tools mostly), cross country ski, camp, and go biking.

My greatest joy is my family. My wife, Lorraine and I have two sons. Isaac and his wife Becky live just down the street from us in the old Soper home. Isaac works for Cole Funeral Home and Becky is a homemaker. Their son, Angus is 18 months old and keeps us all busy.

Our youngest son, Jake just married Amy and they live in an apartment above Lorraine's Dad's house. They are both teachers and hoping to get permanent jobs. It is wonderful to have all of them so close to us

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY TEAM – (Chair: Pat Hull)

Communication Task Force Report - Peter Au

- The team welcomed Arlene Hunter as a new member. Gwenda has been asked to re-join the team to provide us with info etc.
- Carolyn Barr has agreed to instruct the group on how to run the Publisher software.
- Trinity will update its phone system and high speed internet service with Cogeco. Installation will take place in December. A contract will be signed for 3 years that will yield a savings of \$240 per month from the present setup.
- The group will adapt the instructions given by Chris Woods in March to post the upcoming issue of The Communicator on Trinity's website.
- We are considering how we could use social media to involve the youth of Trinity.
- Our budget for 2012 has been submitted to the secretary.

Facebook - A Further Communicate

- I made a facebook group for Trinity. I sent it out to the church "friends" who were already on my list and many of them have added their "friends" to it. I hope that more people will continue to add friends as time goes on. I do plan to include announcements now and then and the intention is that others would use it in the same way. I hope I have the settings right - I did discuss with a few people if I should set it up as a group (where people can all add things and have discussions) or as a profile (where it is managed by one or two people, a little less interactive I think). Maybe as people "friend" you Rev Woods, you could add them to the group?

Arlene Hunter

-Facebook has been part of our life for awhile now. Many of us share birthday wishes, keep up with local events and even find out about major world events via Facebook. It has been a very helpful tool for connecting with our Teen members as we organize Christmas events and make other plans. Social media tools are helping us connect quickly and easily with a wide group of people who we might otherwise have a hard time reaching. Facebook is often the quickest way to immediately check-in with someone regarding a pastoral concern, and it is certainly handy for planning a meeting. All these things have their negative sides, but social media tools are a benefit in a church community committed to better communication. Time to "friend" each other!

Rev Peter Woods

Membership and Welcoming Task Group - Pat Hull

- We assisted with 3 baptisms November 20th.
- Thank you to the groups who volunteered to serve coffee after church service twice a month. We are still hoping other groups will do the same.
- We continue to meet once a month to update records and refill pew literature.
- Our budget for 2012 is \$150 for "coffee time" following church service twice a month.

Outreach Task Group - Brenda King

- We are requesting the Church Council's permission to place "a petition against human trafficking at the back of the church for the attention of the congregation.
- Our budget for 2012 is \$150 to cover the cost of the free community barbecue we host in August.

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM_- (Chair: Karen White)

Glad Tidings and Joy

Presented by

Trinity United Church Choir

And guests

Smiths Falls, On

Sunday, December 18, 2011-12-02

Free Will Offering – Proceeds to go to

Trinity United Church and Tri County Dental Coalition

Coffee Hour to Follow

Door Open at 6:00 PM

The Tri-County Dental Coalition is doing great work here in Smiths Falls. The Coalition, with the support of many local groups and churches and individuals, is providing vital dental care in our community for people who otherwise could not afford this important health service. People from across our region, of all ages, are being served by this Coalition of community partners, dental health-care providers and committed neighbours. There are stories of pain-relief, of self-esteem being restored, of jobs being obtained....with credit going to the Tri-County Dental Coalition. What an amazingly practical form of support for the working poor in our region!

Our Choral Concert on December 18th is donating half the proceeds toward this great community initiative. Come out and enjoy the sounds of Christmas, and help make a difference in our community along the way.

For your information, our congregation is prayerfully considering providing further support for this initiative- joining with other local congregations who see this work as a vital form of ministry in our midst.

Rev Peter Woods

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN – (Chair: Linda Stronski)

-The U.C.W. women would like to extend a big thank-you, to everyone who supported our fund raising endeavours this year. For example the pie makers made 1026 apple pies this fall. Next year is the 50th Anniversary of the U.C.W. We are looking forward to an exciting year.

MEN'S CLUB – (Chair: Jim Warden)

- Trinity's' Men Breakfast Group continues to meet each second Thursday morning of each month at the Cafe on Chambers Street at 8:00 am. Last month 17 members attended. All men are welcome to attend.
- Our main work at present is with the school breakfast programme, (attendance 70 pupils at times).
- We also help with coffee, twice a month after service on Sundays.
- Our Group has provided proper-but boxes at the church hall entrances.

Church Calendars *are available for 2012.* Cost \$5.00. Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board at the main entrance.

Community Prayers: *Please include in your prayers:* Bailieboro-Springville Pastoral Charge, Peterborough Presbytery (Bay of Quinte Conference Prayer Cycle); All Native Circle Conference (United Church "Pray For Our Church"); Violence Against Women (Fellowship of the Least Coin Prayer Concerns).

Interval House: *We are packing a parcel for Interval House again this year.* Unopened personal items, small gifts for women and children and gift cards would be most appreciated. Please leave donations in the boxes provided at the entrances of the Church. Last day: December 11th. For information, please contact Marion McFadden. Please consider regular and fragrance-free items.

Prelude to Christmas: *a concert with the Central Band of the Canadian Forces,* Wednesday December 7th, 7:00 p.m. at SFDCI. Proceeds to environmental projects in our community. Tickets \$10.00 at Modern Thymes, Kiosk, The REAL Deal or Perth Legion. Call 283-9819 or see www.REALaction.ca.

Senior Choir: *Christmas poinsettias* may be ordered by contacting any Choir member or calling Muriel Dillabough at 283-5289 (please leave a message if she is not home), last day to order is December 11th. Cost \$16.00. The plants will be in the Sanctuary for the December 18th service and can be taken home after the December 24th 7:30 p.m. service.

United Church Women: *Please save your used stamps.* They require a 1/4 inch border. One pound of used stamps will buy one bible through the Canadian Bible Society. These may be placed in the box in the alcove. Thank you.