

THE COMMUNICATOR

Christmas Edition – Dec 2020



A Message from Reverend Christopher

Luke 2: 1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke's story describes an era of uncertainty as the region of Judea is converted to a Roman Province. While Judea was already under Roman domination, changes were introduced that tightened control. Part of this was a census or registration. If your nation is under foreign control, a census conducted by the occupying force is unsettling. It is through such an inventory that an oppressor measures both the wealth of the land and the strength of the subjected. No matter how the census was framed by the authorities, its purpose would be suspect. Data collected would enable Rome to measure the numbers of fighting aged folk and their capacity to wage war or insurrection.

These were worrying days. The very reason that Joseph and Mary were compelled to go to Bethlehem would induce anxiety. The place that Mary and Joseph considered their ancestral home would hold much less comfort than they would

normally expect.

In such circumstances many folk feel safer alone; to wait out the uncertainty by staying low and inconspicuous. With everything else that was happening around them, the solitude of the manger may have seemed safer.

With Health Professionals and Governments issuing warnings about travel and family gatherings at Christmas, perhaps for the first time in many of our lives, the unsettling experience of that Holy Family two thousand years ago resonates with us today. Perhaps this year, as we anticipate a vaccine, waiting, avoiding the crowd, even limiting our contact with family and friends is the safer option. Just as the manger may have been so long ago.

As Christians, we believe that anxious waiting is where the Good News starts. From the manger in Bethlehem, a story of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love unfolds. We pray that in our time and place, these gifts will be revealed as 2021 opens up before us.

AMEN.

Christmas Services 2020

December 21st at 6:30 ~
The Longest Night ~ Worship service of Hope, Strength & Community In the Sanctuary

December 24th ~ Christmas Eve
Children's Service at 4:30 will be virtual
Family Service at 7:30 will be in the Sanctuary
Late Night Communion Service will be virtual

Please view virtual services at www.trinityunitedsf.ca or www.facebook.com/trinityunitedchurchsmithsfalls

Message from the Treasurer

Seasons Greetings Friends & Family!
2020 looked incredibly different at Trinity. However, we were still able to see hope, peace, love and joy through the hard work and Ministry of Trinity. May you continue to share hope as we close off 2020. May you continue to share the Peace of Christ. May you share love with family, friends, and neighbours. And let us say goodbye to 2020 by spreading lots of Joy to everyone. May this holiday season find you safe and healthy as we celebrate Hope, Peace, Love and Joy!

Diane Bennett, Treasurer

Note: Our books will be closing December 31st so please keep Trinity in mind when offering your Christmas gifts.

Keep the winter blahs away...

Are you interested in adult learning? Then check out the Ottawa School of Theology and Spirituality. Classes are held on ZOOM for the winter semester.

Follow the link

<http://osts.ca/courses.htm#>

[Winter](#) You do not need a ZOOM account to participate.

The Property Team at Trinity wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. During 2020 the Property Team has taken on the following projects:

- repair work was done to the tower - replaced the window with wood panels and vents
- removed bird waste and feathers from the tower which could have caused health concerns
- new flooring in the kitchen
- replaced a large amount of old wiring
- hard-wired the screen in the Fellowship Hall
- wiring done from the office to communication centre
- working with Advanced Alarm to replace the present system with a new up-to-date system

The Property Team would like to thank Crosbie Electric, Jim Crosbie and Doug Bradford, for their generosity in helping Trinity with our electrical needs by donating parts and labour.

I will be retiring from the Property Team as Co-Chair as of Dec. 31, 2020 and would like to thank everyone for all the support over the years. Ron Stronski

Outreach and Social Justice

Brown Bag Lunches and Blessings continue to be distributed each Tuesday and Saturday from 11:30 to 12:30.

This is the season of giving and that is exactly what Trinity is doing. It is such a pleasure to feed the body and soul to those who need it at this time with the generous donations and grants. This mission not only does that for the public and vulnerable but the Trinity members, friends and the 15 volunteers who make this possible. We have passed out over 10,000 meals and have given away 4,000 masks since the start of the pandemic. We have moved into the gym to get ready for the winter weather.

The Brown Bag Lunches and Blessings volunteers and recipients of this awesome mission would like to thank you for your support. Merry Christmas and have a safe and healthy New Year. Betty Lou Kempt

Ministry & Personnel

At this time, the M&P committee on your behalf, want to thank Gwenda Kinch our secretary, for all the work she has done for Trinity in her past 20 years as secretary. We wish her well in retirement and hopefully she can now take time to relax.

We have hired a bookkeeper, Katie Pomeroy, who began on December 1. She is from Smiths Falls and has a very active bookkeeping business. The hiring committee will be having interviews for a secretary this week and look forward to completing our office team in the very near future.

On behalf of the M&P committee, I want to wish everyone a good Christmas and we look forward to better times in 2021.

Judy Drummond



Trustees

Season's Greetings and Warm Wishes for a safe and wonderful Christmas...

"Keep the Faith and Look Out for One Another"

From the members of your Board of Trustees - Rev Chris Ryan, Bill Dickson, David Johnston, Muriel Dillabough, Steven Blair, Stewart Graham and Bob Swan.

United Church Women

On behalf of the UCW, we would like to thank everyone for their help and support for our Christmas Wreath Sale. As you know, we weren't able to hold our usual fundraisers this year, and when this option came up, we took a chance on providing these beautiful decorations. We were not disappointed and the recipients were happy with their lovely fresh Christmas Wreaths.

This was so successful; we plan to add this to our fundraising options for 2021.

Again, thank you for your support.

Spiritual Leadership

Who Do You Say Angels Are?

That was one of the questions that were sent to our children in their Advent mail out. Rev. Christopher included a cover letter explaining what Advent means, why we celebrate this church season, a personal message of hope and a blessing prayer. Also included were activity sheets, a cut out Advent wreath to assemble, an Advent calendar, and Names for Jesus.

Our Christmas mail out will include: a Christmas story colouring booklet, culturally accurate Christmas stickers to place on a manger scene, a star to decorate, and a candy cane with the candy cane legend. A personal note to each child will go with the Christmas card enclosed in the package.

Children will be invited to place their stickers on their "manger scene" as they watch the pre-recorded Children's Service on December 24th which will be online at 4:30pm through the Trinity United Church Facebook Page.

Our aim is to stay engaged with our children, while encouraging and teaching them about Jesus and ways to build their faith until we can meet again in person.





Healing Pathway

Prayer is the act of sending...light from the bountifulness of your love to other people to heal, free, and bless them." John O'Donahue "Anam Cara"

We do not necessarily need words to pray. St. John of the Cross affirms this in his teaching "The language that God hears best is the silent language of love."

For the heart connection...neither time nor distance holds any meaning..." (Healing from the Heart, Chpt 10, pg 159).

With the onset of the pandemic back in March, the Healing Pathway Team had to pivot to a different model, as hands on sessions were deemed too risky for both practitioners and recipients. Fortunately, as expressed in the quotes above, the heart connection between humans, mediated by Divine Intelligence, is not bounded by considerations of time and space.

Starting in March, members of the team, including 2 partners from St. Paul's United, Perth, began gathering on Wednesdays in a virtual energetic circle to offer a 20 minute Healing session for anyone who chose to gather with us, either through Zoom or in spirit. The need to "pivot" proved a blessing in many ways, not the least of which was opening our healing ministry to people far removed from our local congregation. The sessions evolved

into an unconventional Prayer Circle for over 60 individuals and groups, as team members, with permission, brought forward names to be held in our hearts with healing intention. While only a few joined us actively at the specific time, there was a strong sense of "spirit-nearing" during this time of physical distancing. Those that did join us actively, reported feeling peace and pain relief. Others felt helped by just knowing that their names were on the list.

The Distance Healing Pathway Circle continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 12:30 for Practitioners and 1:00 for recipients. If you are feeling physically, emotionally, or spiritually depleted, overwhelmed, or in pain, please feel free to join us from the comfort of your own home. Simply relax, imagine you are surrounded by a circle of healing love, and open to feeling God's compassion enter your mind, body and spirit exactly as it is meant to for your highest good. Trust in the process and God's Grace and you may be surprised. We also offer personal distance sessions at a mutually convenient time during the week.

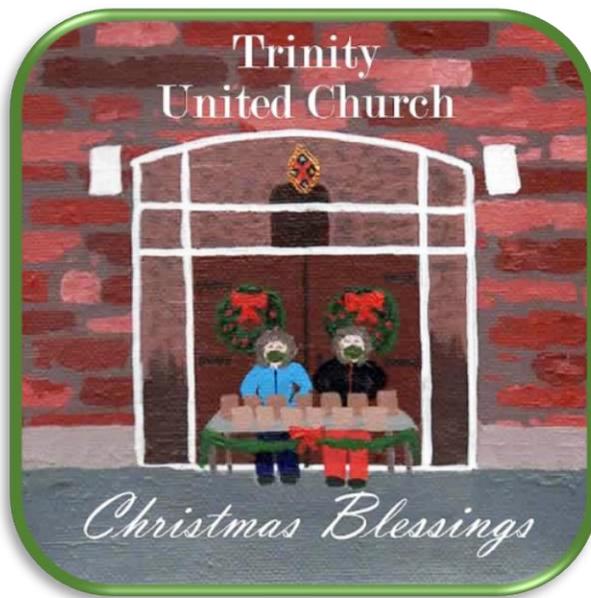
If you wish to participate with the H.P. Practitioners through Zoom, or receive a private distance session or wish more information, get in touch with Carolyn Lunn at crlunn51@gmail.com (613-283-6663).

Even if you have fear, know that you are loved. Know the loving arms of God, the Universe, reach out to hold you. Know that they cradle you with warmth, even though all you feel is cold.—Amanda Cirinna.



Christian Community Team

Wishing you health, blessings, peace and love at Christmas and beyond



Communications Team

We are excited to announce that Trinity now has over 500 Facebook followers! That's exciting news because we now can share our Sunday Services LIVE, by video to any of those 500 people who are not able to be in the Sanctuary with us Sunday Morning. We hope you will join us, either Virtually or in person to watch the Christmas Services this year. Times of the services are on the 1st page of this newsletter.

As I write this, after just finishing up our Editorial meeting via ZOOM, I wonder how many people have "pivoted" to new ways of communicating during Covid. I know many have taken on that challenge and are enjoying new ways of meeting up with friends, family and colleagues. I also know there are some who have not and may be feeling somewhat isolated. If you, or someone you know, is feeling unconnected from Trinity, need some help connecting or are feeling isolated, please let us know. We have many ways of helping with that.

Phone 613-283-4444

Email secretary@trinityunitedsf.ca

Facebook inbox: <https://www.facebook.com/TrinityUnitedChurchSmithsFalls>

Website: <https://www.trinityunitedsf.ca/>

All the best for the Happiest, Healthiest Christmas and New Year

Your Communication's Team

Chris Dickson, Peter Au, Arlene Hunter, Daisy Au & Mary Joynt

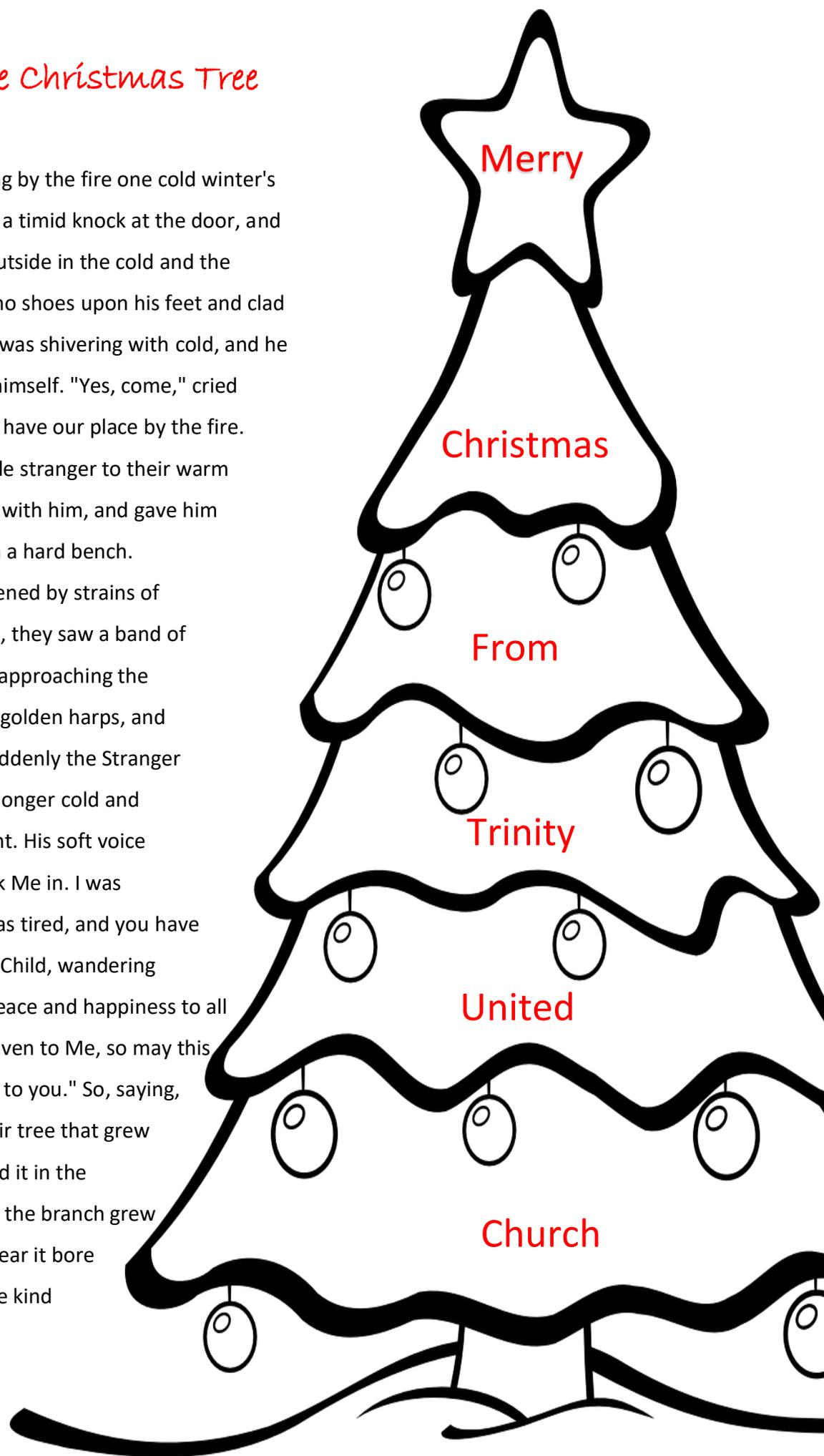


The Legend of the Christmas Tree

BY: LUCY WHEELLOCK

Two little children were sitting by the fire one cold winter's night. All at once they heard a timid knock at the door, and one ran to open it. There, outside in the cold and the darkness, stood a child with no shoes upon his feet and clad in thin, ragged garments. He was shivering with cold, and he asked to come in and warm himself. "Yes, come," cried both the children; "you shall have our place by the fire. Come in!" They drew the little stranger to their warm seat and shared their supper with him, and gave him their bed, while they slept on a hard bench.

In the night they were awakened by strains of sweet music and, looking out, they saw a band of children in shining garments approaching the house. They were playing on golden harps, and the air was full of melody. Suddenly the Stranger Child stood before them; no longer cold and ragged, but clad in silvery light. His soft voice said: "I was cold and you took Me in. I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was tired, and you gave Me your bed. I am the Christ Child, wandering through the world to bring peace and happiness to all good children. As you have given to Me, so may this tree every year give rich fruit to you." So, saying, He broke a branch from the fir tree that grew near the door, and He planted it in the ground and disappeared. But the branch grew into a great tree, and every year it bore wonderful golden fruit for the kind children.





Merry Christmas

**STEWARDSHIP TEAM REPORT
CHRISTMAS 2020**

Following a slow start in September, the Stewardship Team continue to monitor and oversee the financial position of the church. We have formed a small core group of people who will take on looking at future Fundraising initiatives during this unprecedented times of Covid-19.

The **HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS AUCTION** took place on-line through the Trinity United Smiths Falls Facebook page. It started on **Friday, December 4 at 5:00 p.m. and ran until Thursday, December 10 at 5:00 p.m.** Many thanks are extended to everyone who helped by contributing their baking and gift prizes we raised over \$2,600.

Further thanks go out to Arnel Pattemore and Chris Dickson whose artistry created lovely Christmas cards for sale as another fundraiser.

Trinity has a vision that is amazing and exciting. We invite you to invest yourself through the resources God has given you – your energy, your prayers, and your money – in this work to which God has called us.

As the year closes, your Stewardship Team thank you for your continued generosity and send all best wishes for a safe and healthy Christmas season.

