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A COVID-19 Pandemic Update (November)

"Seeking Sanctuary": Notes from Rev. Ted's Bible

Open your Bible-- whether it's on a smartphone or on a shelf!-- to Psalm 63. You'll find there an ancient prayer that describes the hardship of "the wilderness" combined with a longing for "the sanctuary."

This Psalm speaks with a new resonance to our pandemic times-- where we suffer a Covid-imposed wilderness, and hanker to be together again in our very own church sanctuary! That very word "sanctuary" suggests the warmth, comfort, and peace that we all so desire these days. Psalm 63 compares it to *joyfully singing in the shadow of God's wings*.

At Trinity we are again occupying our sanctuary for worship-- buttressed by careful safety protocols. And we're trying to bring that same sense of sanctuary to you at home. I want to thank all of our leaders for their many efforts to spread that warmth, comfort and peace into our homes and our lives. We so need the nourishment of our stories, songs, community and traditions --now as much as ever!

As we move into Advent --followed by the seasons of Christmas and Epiphany-- our experience of this pandemic wilderness is made bearable by our care for one another. We will help, encourage and inspire one another, whether or not we are comfortable in the church building. Because --although Psalm 63 longs to be back in the sanctuary-- the author reminds us that God's steadfast love is not limited to any physical space. That perfect love is our truest sanctuary, and casts out all fear.

Blessings,



... from your Board Chair

As we welcome the season of advent, let's celebrate worshipping together, both in person and virtually. Through technology, we are now able to bring the Good News to more people who have been increasingly isolated through the challenges of Covid-19.

A big "thank you" goes out to our staff who have had to demonstrate their flexibility to ensure our administrative and spiritual needs continue to be met. Most often, I remember the care our staff provide to those less fortunate in our downtown community. Even when that care makes us feel uncomfortable, it is showing care to all that is what our faith is all about. I would be remiss if I did not make a special shout out of thanks to our digital team, led by John Roberts, who have allowed for our church life to continue during these challenging times.

Repairs to the fireside room and the ceiling in the nursery and offices are well underway. We can soon look forward to having our church more fully open while still respecting the health guidelines. As we close the calendar and financial year, we look forward to your continued support. We must rely on your personal support as many activities and rentals that generally support our budget were not possible this year. While we are close to completing the roof repairs fundraising, there remains an outstanding balance. Costs for the ceiling repair, not covered by insurance must now also be raised.

As a final note, let's not look at what we are missing this Christmas, but focus on what we have. Time with family, a safe and warm place to call home are privileges that too many in our world do not have. We are truly blessed.

Merry Christmas

Bob Cook
Trinity United Church Board

. . . From the Minister of Music

The past few months have been a new experience for all of us. A year ago, as we approached Advent, who would have thought that live streaming, virtual choir, YouTube services, social distancing etc. would become household words around Trinity! All of us have experienced somewhat 'steep' learning curves.

Sunday, November 8 (will be/was) a special day of Remembrance. Thanks to Marcel MacDonald, who played the Last Post and Reveille, and Rob Sanders who played the Lament and postlude.

As we approach Advent, I, along with choir members, am preparing special music for the season, subject to the constraints of Covid19 protocols. As a choir (and virtual choir), we especially thank John Roberts for his **many** hours of work spent mixing our individual voices into the fine choir which you see and hear on Sunday. John has listened to 100's, if not 1000's of choir sound recordings since March, and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude!

Recently, we have built a Covid barrier at the front of the sanctuary, to make possible some live vocal and instrumental music during our services. The structure was designed and built by Rob Farris and Chris Clarke, who have spent many hours at the church during the past 2 weeks. Rob contacted our local Health Unit to be sure that the design would be suitable (It was!!) so that we could finish construction as soon as possible. As I write this report (Nov. 5-6-7), the centre music pod is complete and usable. Rob and Chris will finish the construction over the next 2 weeks. Thank you to Sandy and Don Haslam who did much of the painting, to help the structure blend in with the surroundings. Thank you to the Trinity AOTS for a generous contribution towards the project. The balance of the project costs have been donated by a church member family.

I would like to give my sincerest thanks to our very dedicated and loyal virtual choir members who have been faithfully recording individual parts since mid-March. I would also like to thank Laura Farris-Einarson and John Henderson who continue to share their talents with us on a regular basis.

As we move into the Advent season, we hope you'll let us know which carols or hymns you would like sung at 10:20 each Sunday. You may leave your requests with Wanda in our church office. (705-474-3310). We look forward to having special Advent/Christmas anthems or solos each Sunday, and on Christmas Eve in this special season. May the hope, peace, joy and love of this blessed season remain with you and your family throughout the season and in 2021.

Respectfully submitted, Betty Farris

. . . from the Finance Committee

As of September 30th, our year-to-date (YTD) income of approximately \$253,000 was less than expenses by about \$22,000. This year's income is 18% lower than last year, due in large part to Covid-19 having a negative impact on offerings, donations and fundraising.

Your Board has decided to undertake an initiative to encourage people to give more if they are able as the Christmas season approaches. Included in the envelope with this newsletter is your 2020 contribution statement up to October 31st. We are hopeful that folks will search their hearts after seeing their statements and make a special contribution if their finances will allow it. Thank you in advance to those who can respond to this request.

Donations to the Roof Restoration Fund have continued over the past few months, bringing the fund total to \$154,900, 85% of the project cost. Appreciation is extended to the people who have donated financially to this fund and to those involved in carrying out various fundraising initiatives to help pay off restoration costs. On September 30th, several payments were made towards the congregational loans and one generous party decided to convert their loan to a donation, meaning that outstanding loans now are reduced from \$64,000 to \$25,000.

Looking ahead to the next few months, we continue to have a reasonable bank balance but are faced with significant costs related to replacement of ceilings and making our services more widely available via YouTube and DVDs, including costs for audiovisual hardware, software and licensing. We also must fulfill our \$12,000.00 Mission and Service commitment to the United Church of Canada. We were successful in obtaining an interest-free loan of up to \$40,000 which is part of an assistance program offered by the Federal Government. These funds will be used to pay operating costs as required.

During this trying time, Trinity continues to reach out and serve the wider community. Your contributions towards this work are much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted, John Hafliadson

... from the UCW

The UCW has been very quiet since Covid struck. Our treasurer is proceeding with our Charitable Donations, so that these organizations will not be hurting.

We usually give Lisa things for people in need. These she packages and gives out to those who will appreciate them. This year she is coordinating with 'Boots on the Ground' and together they are creating the packages. Into these packages will go hats, mitts, socks, slippers, scarves, toiletries, and treats. All apparel needs to be adult-sized. The UCW usually gives her a donation to cover the cost of purchasing these items, plus we donate any left-over bazaar items to be included. If anyone can help out with donations in this regard, it would be most helpful, and save Lisa the time of going to purchase said items. She needs things by Dec. 6th. Time is short, but with God's help, much can be accomplished. Thank you in advance for your help with these items. For more information, contact Lisa, or the Church office.

As the winter season approaches, stay home, stay warm, and stay safe. Many are finding the time long and boring. Take time to keep in touch with your church family. Hearing a cheery voice at the other end of the telephone is always welcome. After talking to others, you may have interesting things to share, and maybe you will "make somebody's day".

Blessings to all.

Judy Biondi, President

Prayer Shawl Report

It has been quiet, which may be a good thing. There are shawls available. If you call the church office, arrangements can be made for you to get one for someone who would appreciate it.

We are trying to organize a Blessing Sunday for the new shawls. More news will follow.

Thanks to all who have knit/crocheted during the pandemic. It is a great way to relieve the boredom!

Blessings to all.

Judy Biondi

Trinity Prayer Shawl Ministry

A Word of Thanks from Betty and Rob Farris and Anne and Dave Church and their respective families:
Submitted by Rob Farris.

Many of you will know that Betty and I lost our dear nephew Andrew Church (son of Anne Church, Rob's sister, and cousin of Laura, Kaydence and Nevaeh) to a rare form of cancer on October 9, 2020, his 35th birthday.

I selected what I felt was the perfect prayer shawl - a deep navy blue colour. We sent it to Andrew, along with a letter of praise for his many fine attributes and deeds, in an all too short life on earth.

He received the shawl and was truly touched by it, and the attached note from the UCW, as were his parents and sister! It provided comfort during his final days at home in Dundas and a short time in a Hamilton hospice.

But, there is more to this story! When we walked into Andrew's funeral at Knox Presbyterian, Waterloo, there was the shawl - on the table with Andrew's photo on it, flanked by 2 floral tributes - seen by many at the funeral and on the YouTube live-stream due to Covid restrictions.

Recently, while talking to my sister, she was using the shawl for warmth (and, I think memories) on a cool October evening.

I want to thank the UCW and Trinity Church for the Prayer Shawl Ministry. It has made a difference to our family - a tangible expression of God's love for our world.

I found out afterward who knit this particular blue shawl, and send an extra word of thanks for her gift from the heart.

Also, our families acknowledge and are very grateful for the support of our Trinity Prayer Chain and our Trinity Church family. Your prayers and caring brought peace to our family. Andrew knew he was part of our prayer chain and expressed his thanks.

With thanks and gratitude,

Betty, Rob, Laura, Kaydence, Nevaeh, and Anne & Dave Church & family.

AOTS Report

Your AOTS Group has been active despite the continued difficulties associated with the Covid Virus limiting our ability to meet in person. We have met many times using Zoom and some of us have been able to talk "person to person" outside Trinity after a Church Service. We are very much missing our monthly breakfast meetings at Burger World and at Trinity.

Ed Rose continues his fantastic work in getting the AOTS gift card orders in and then delivering them to everyone's door. The funds raised by the sale of Gift Cards allows the AOTS to provide many opportunities to the youth of Trinity and to assist the Church in purchasing needed protective equipment for the Sanctuary, most recently in the form of the protective barrier which should allow us to enjoy some live music during our Church Service.

We do look forward to a return to a normal meeting arrangement. If you would like more information on joining the AOTS Men's Group at Trinity call me at 705-474-7847.

Sincerely,

David McKenney, Chair AOTS

Advent 2020: "The End of the World"

A few years ago, Trinity hosted a regional gathering where we repeatedly sang "It's the End of the World as We Know It." In 2020, Covid-19 has made those words feel like a prophecy!

It is fascinating that there's no season in the church year that is more focused on "the end of the world" than Advent. Every year, every Sunday of Advent, we are encouraged to read scriptures that anticipate and describe the end of the world. This Advent, we'll give some of those passages particular attention as we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Bethlehem baby!

Advent Communion Service - November 29th, 2020

If nothing else, Covid has forced us to be extra-creative! As a case-in-point, Trinity brings you "virtual communion" on Sunday November 29th! People attending worship in-person will be invited to pick up a safely prepared "communion kit" on their way to their pews. For them, communion may not be quite so different. But people participating via DVD or YouTube are invited to prepare their own elements before sitting down to worship. Don't feel limited to white bread and grape juice-- maybe you'll have pita and pineapple juice, milk and muesli bread, or chardonnay and soda crackers! Join us for this engaging faith experiment: a socially distanced sacrament!

The LONGEST NIGHT Service

The Advent and Christmas seasons can inspire profound highs and lows in our lives-- more so than ever during a pandemic! On Monday Dec. 21st at 7 p.m., Trinity teams up with St. Andrew's again for our traditional service of heartfelt string music and candlelit prayer in the Trinity sanctuary. Members of both churches will be welcome to show up anytime after 6:30 p.m.-- although unfortunately the service will not be as participatory as in years past, owing to Covid protocols.

Like our other worship opportunities, this service will be accessible via Trinity's YouTube station throughout the Christmas season. More than ever, many of us need this opportunity for a spacious pause, to contemplate the hopes, fears, sadness and prayers that fill that longest night of the year.

CHRISTMAS EVE

For Christmas Eve this year, we anticipate that there may be extra interest in attending worship in-person. In response, Trinity plans to host two separate safe worship opportunities, at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. We will clean up and air out the sanctuary in-between. Both services will be substantially the same, featuring a virtual Christmas pageant, the scripture story, and some of your favourite Christmas hymns.

We want to take special care-- so if you plan to attend, we would appreciate hearing from you about which service you'd prefer to be at. Please e-mail or call the Trinity office with your plans: 705-474-3310 or trinitynorthbay@gmail.com

Sunday School and Trinity Families

Sunday School Christmas Pageant

This year we will be creating a digital Christmas Pageant! *A Pandemic Pageant*, written and directed by Darlene Laferriere, will be shared during our Christmas Eve Worship Services. If your child(ren) would like to participate in this fun and meaningful pageant please be sure to contact Lisa at blais.trinity@gmail.com

A costume bag, script and some other special goodies will be delivered to you. Most of the pageant will be recorded by families at home (with clear directions) and some of it will be recorded via Zoom. We will be recording music for the pageant before the end of November.

More details will be shared as we get closer to the time.

Advent at Home

A Sunday School *Advent at Home* activity package will be available for pick-up or delivery on Sunday November 22nd. If your family would like to receive this package please contact Lisa. In it will be some Advent activities that you can do at home as a family, as well as some activities for your child to do anytime. There will be a few other special treats as well.

A Sunday School Zoom session will be planned in December. Stay tuned for more information!

Secret Santa Gift Exchange

Families who wish to participate in a Secret Santa Gift exchange (homemade/handmade gifts preferred) please contact Lisa. We will match you up with another family to exchange gifts with (you will know who you are creating gifts for but you will not know who is creating gifts for you). Some ideas to pack in the gift bag are: nut free baked goods, jams, movie night items, handmade crafts, Christmas ornaments, gifts in a jar, family game night items, etc.

Please sign up to participate by Sunday December 6th – delivery will be the week of Christmas. More details to follow!

We Need YOU!

I'm prayerfully hopeful that 2021 will be an exciting time to be part of our church. As we approach this new season and move past the ceiling repairs and COVID-19, we are looking for volunteers to join the various committees that report to our Board, or the Board itself as vice-chair, and enable our church to meet its mission and goals.

Many of you reading this newsletter are already actively serving within the church, but there are others who have yet to find that place of service where they both will be a blessing and will be blessed as well. Now is a great time for each and every one within our congregation to pause for a few moments and consider your level of service within our church.

The Nominating Committee will soon be undertaking the process of recruiting volunteers. If you are interested in serving on one of our committees, or if you would like to nominate fellow members, please get in touch with somebody on the soon-to-be appointed Nominating Committee. We'll let you know who is on the Nomination Committee via Lisa's Friday emails, but until then please talk to either Lisa Blais or John Roberts.

Besides the Board vice-chair position, these are the committees you might be interested in joining...

- Building and Grounds Committee
- Christian Education and Outreach Committee, "CEO Committee"
- Communications Committee
- Finance and Stewardship Committee, "Finance Committee"
- Ministry and Personnel Committee, "M&P Committee"
- Pastoral Care and Visiting Committee
- Worship Committee
- Board of Trustees

Blessings in Christ!

Submitted on behalf of the Nominations Committee,
John Roberts

Christmas Bag Outreach

Each year Trinity's youth group collects items for Trinity's Christmas Bag Outreach Project. We provided over 150 Christmas gifts to children, youth and adults in our community! As with so many other things this year, we have had to adapt our giving program due to Covid.

This year, we will be preparing gift bags that will be given out to the homeless and vulnerable people through 'Hopes Heroes Outreach' and 'Boots on the Ground'. Items that would bring comfort and joy to folks who need it would be appreciated. Some suggestions are: mitts, socks, slippers, treats (regular and diabetic ones), playing cards, puzzle books or small magazines, toiletries (**such as hand sanitizer, chapstick, hand cream**), pocket tissues, emergency blankets and rain ponchos. Christmas gift bags or money to purchase gifts are also appreciated.

If you would like to contribute to this outreach program please bring your donations to Trinity on Sunday morning (place them in the box in the narthex) or call the church office to arrange a time to drop them off or for them to be picked up. You can donate items until Sunday December 6th. Thank-you for supporting this important outreach project!

Decadent Dessert Fundraiser

On Friday December 4th, Trinity United Church will host an "on-line" decadent dessert auction. This will be a fundraising event for the roof fund.

We are asking members and friends of Trinity to donate a decadent dessert to be made on or before December 4th. The items will be posted online for the 10-hour auction, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Once the auction closes, we will deliver the desserts to the winning bidders and payment can be made by cash or by e-transfer.

Some of the already donated items include: butter tarts from Nancy Dewar Stenning, Chocolate Pie from Barb Roberts, Layer Pumpkin coffee cake from Brenda Holbein, Nanaimo Bars from Linsey Mutch.

How about your specialty? Chocolate dipped strawberries? Chocolate covered cherries? Lemon meringue pie? Cheesecake? Death by Chocolate? Trifle? Sticky Buns? Homemade turtle chocolates? If someone can offer a half dozen of something or a half cake, that would be wonderful too. Perhaps someone has a Trinity Apple Pie in their freezer from last year that could fetch quite a few dollars at the auction.

If you are able to donate a dessert or if you are able to help with delivery, please let Darlene know at Darlene_laferriere@hotmail.com.

4 Trinity

Trinity's annual Cookie Walk has been cancelled for this November. Hopefully next year we will be able to once again have a Cookie Walk.

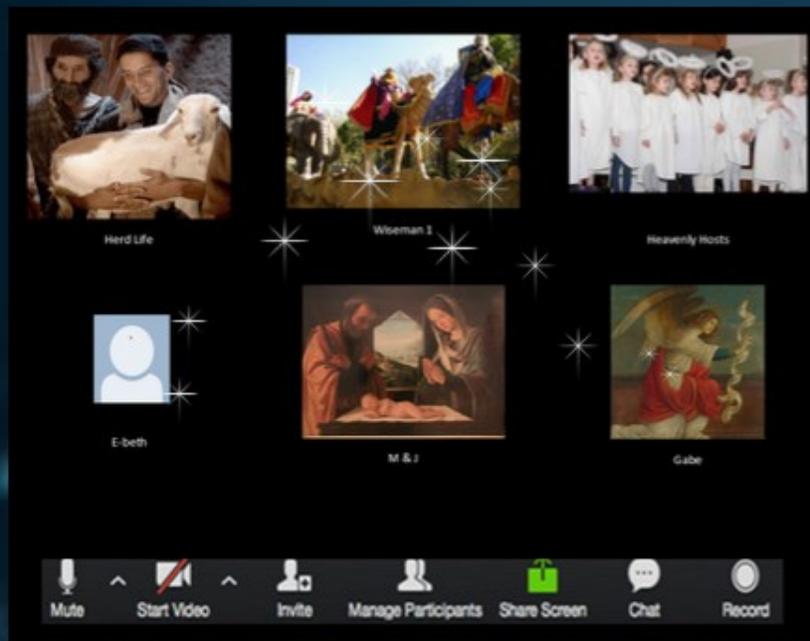
The 4Trinity Fundraising Team thank all those who have supported this event in past years.

Submitted by Barb Roberts.

The Apple Pie Lady would like to thank all of the individuals who purchased virtual apple pies. We have sold over 325 non-pies. We are still able to provide more pies if you would like to stock up for Christmas. Please call the church to place your order and pay by cheque or e-transfer. Buy them early, before we run out.
Darlene

ALTHOUGH COVID 19 HAS KEPT MANY OF US AT HOME ON SUNDAY MORNINGS, "IN-SERVICE" WORSHIP SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE AT TRINITY. YOU CAN JOIN US FOR WORSHIP IN PERSON AT 10:30 A.M. (WITH COVID PROTOCOLS IN PLACE) OR VIA LIVESTREAM/RECORDED WORSHIP ON TRINITY NORTH BAY'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL. IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO ACCESS THE INTERNET AND WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A DVD OF THE WORSHIP SERVICE DELIVERED, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (705-474-3310) TO REQUEST ONE.

Trinity's Sunday School Presents A Pandemic Pageant



Thursday December 24th
4 pm and 7 pm
On Trinity North Bay's
YouTube Channel