



Cloverleaf

Trinity United Methodist Church

December 2020

Volume 32 ♦ Number 12

ADVENT 2020

Making Room

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRISTMAS

PLEASE PLAN NOW TO ATTEND A NEW TWIST ON A BELOVED TRINITY TRADITION...

Drive-In Live Nativity Services
Christmas Eve at 5 pm & 7 pm

In 1923 Thomas Chisholm was inspired to write "Great is Thy faithfulness."

"Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see; all I have needed Thy hand hath provided... Great is Thy faithfulness Lord unto me."

During this season of Advent, we are reminded of how great it is the faithfulness of God, once again. During this season we are presented with a new exploration of the old concept of God as one who keeps God's promises. As we explore this old idea, I wanted us to be in conversation with the Rev. Ed Robb's new book "Making Room: Sharing the Love of Christmas." In this advent study we seek to explore what it means for Christians to make room in their hearts for God and neighbors. This four-week study explores the importance of welcoming the sojourner as we explore the interactions with the Holy Family, the shepherds, and the magi. The story of Jesus' birth encourages us to widen our borders and increase our sense of community to make room for those whom God loves.

This is what we have to look forward to during this season of Advent. Not only are we coming to explore the old idea of God's faithfulness but also the powerful knowledge that God's faithfulness is an expression of God's generosity. Indeed, it is because of God's generosity that we are able to experience God's love, mercy, and compassion. It is because of God's amazing generosity that we are able to experience in all its power the words from the Gospel of John:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (*John 3:16-17*)

God gave us God's best: God's self in the Son. There is no way we can miss the point God is making. As God has given, God is asking us to give in return. It is not that we are buying into God's salvation by giving as God gives; it is simply that we are imitating our heavenly Father, and when we do that our lives are filled with the joy of God's salvation, with the joy of knowing that we are been a blessing to others.

This generous God knows no bounds to show us how extreme is God's love, hospitality, acceptance, and inclusiveness. Therefore, it is in our imitation of this God that we find true joy and a full life. When we act like God, when we welcome the stranger, when we feed the hungry, when we care for those in need in our midst, when we care for the oppressed and abused (*Matthew 25:34-36*), we find a life full of God's joy. As we are reminded by Paul in the book of Acts: "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (*20:35*).

As a matter of fact, when we live that generous life, which is an imitation of God, we then truly experience a joyful life, a fulfilled life, a life filled with purpose. Our lives are transformed into the image of the divine.

When we acknowledge that all we have – life, wealth, education, and our salvation—is a gift that comes out of God's abundant generosity, we are able to say with the Chronicler: "Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hands." (*1Chroni. 29: 14*).

Indeed, as we hear these words we are reminded of God's steadfastness, of God's faithfulness to us:

"Great is Thy faithfulness, " O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy **compassions**, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

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"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"
 Morning by morning **new mercies** I see;
 All I have needed **Thy hand hath provided**—
 "Great is Thy faithfulness, " Lord, unto me!

Let us during this season of Advent explore together, God's faithfulness, God's abundant generosity, God's steadfast love.

In Christ's Service,
 Pastor Eliezer



Re- Entering Well Task Force Update

The Task Force continues to work on developing safe practices and acquiring the necessary cleaning products, signage, etc. for us to re-enter our sanctuary and begin worshipping together. The safety of our church family and staff remains paramount. We are guided by the most recent local and state mandates and Baltimore Washington Conference recommendations.

The re-entering well procedures document was recently mailed to the congregation. It contains detailed information on exactly what to expect when it is time to return to indoor worship. Following are some highlights of that document.

- Check in time begins 30 minutes before service. You will park and enter on the W. Patrick Street side of the building. Exceptions for those using the handicapped spaces will be made.

- All people should enter the building wearing a mask. If you don't have one, one will be provided for you. If you are unable to wear one, you are invited to watch the live stream service at your home.
- You will register in the lobby and be escorted to your seat by an usher. Seating location will be determined by the number of people in your household to insure proper social distancing.
- There will be no singing and no bulletins. We will use the projector for the order of worship.
- When you are directed by the usher, you will exit using the door in the front, left side of the sanctuary.
- Restrooms are limited to one person at a time. Please follow directions for cleaning all surfaces you touch with the sanitizing wipes provided.
- The building will be disinfected prior to each service with an electrostatic sanitizing machine.

JOY CLUB ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 2020 at 11:30 AM
DUTCH'S DAUGHTER RESTAURANT



The Joy Club is a group of Just Older Youth who enjoy getting together for lunch at a safe location and practice social distancing. The Christmas Luncheon is always a special celebration of community and joy in the Christmas season. The meal at Dutch's Daughter is always top notch. Here are the details for this year's celebration:

Monday December 7th at 11:30 am at Dutch's Daughter Restaurant at 581 Himes Ave in Frederick. The menu choices include, Chicken, Salmon or Shrimp for \$32.00 per person which includes everything, tax and gratuity. Also, Crab or Beef Medallions for \$38.00 per person. We will gather in a room on the second floor...elevator available. If interested, please contact Denny Shafer at 301-663-5043 with your choice of menu.

Even if you are not 55 yet... we welcome any interested Trinity member to join us for this special occasion. All are welcome! This is an opportunity to safely gather and to celebrate Christmas Hope in the midst of these trying times. May the Peace of Jesus bless and guide you always.

- Pastor John Morrill & Denny Shafer



Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to everyone who came to fill shoeboxes at our packing event on November 6 and 7. Because of your support of donated items and

generous monetary support, we were able to **pack over 600 shoebox gifts**

that will soon be making their way to the processing center to be inspected before being shipped to children *all over the world.*

Along with the shoebox, each child is given a booklet called *"The Greatest Gift"* – a child friendly version of the Gospel, written in their own language. In many areas, the children will be invited to take part in a 12 lesson discipleship program called *"The Greatest Journey"*. They will learn about the love God has for them and what it means to be a Christian. Much like our confirmation classes, they will have the opportunity to profess their faith in Jesus and begin their faith journey, if they chose.

Thank you, Trinity, for your desire to share the love of Christ and the hope He brings with children of the world.

Community Living Christmas

Community Living is a *Frederick nonprofit organization* that supports people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. Over the years Trinity has developed a strong relationship with the organization and its residents by providing space for training, hosting a Spring and Christmas Party each year, and doing seasonal yard work at one of the residential homes. Traditionally, this is the time of year that the Missions Team begins planning the Community Living Christmas Party. We put up the Holiday Hope Tree, and our generous church family provides a gift for each of the residents. Because of the pandemic, this will be the *first time in 21 years that we **will not** be hosting our Community Living Christmas Party.* But we would **still like to remember our friends this Christmas by delivering a gift basket to each of the 26 homes.** If you would like to help us make this happen, please consider making a contribution towards the cost of the baskets. Donations can be sent to the office **by December 6**, clearly marked for "Community Living Christmas Gift".

If you have questions contact Laura Welker, 301 788-0048.

Staff Gift



Dear Members& Attendees of Trinity Church,

The Christmas season is almost here. As we reflect on the past year, we are reminded of our many blessings even in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic. We thank God for friends, family, and loved ones who support us with kindness and guidance as we have endured this uncertain time.

Our tradition at Trinity Church has been to express our appreciation to our pastors and professional staff with a monetary gift. These gifts are but a small token of our appreciation for all the work, leadership and service our staff and pastoral leadership has done over and above that which is required. All gifts will be consolidated and shared among the church administrative/office staff.

If you wish to contribute, please put your gift into an envelope clearly marked: "Staff Christmas Gift, ATTN: Staff Parish Relations Ministry Team", and either place the envelope in with one of the upcoming Sunday offerings, or mail it to the church office.

The mailing address is: Trinity United Methodist Church ATTN: SPRC
703 West Patrick Street
Frederick, MD 21701-4029

We ask that all contributions to this year's collective staff gift be received at the church office no later than Sunday, December 6. We also ask that you remember that your gift is in addition to, and not a replacement for, your regular offering to Trinity Church.

Thank you for your contribution and expression of appreciation to those who help lead us at Trinity throughout the year. Peace and blessings to our entire church family!

Aaron Hastie
Chairperson - SPRC

Don Fine
Co-Chairperson - Church Council

Dick Gessner
Co-Chairperson - Church Council

Youth Sunday Mini-Sermon: Jasmine Osborne

I want you to imagine a time where you were shown grace or love—a time where you may not have been deserving of such compassion but were still shown it unconditionally. Maybe a stranger paid for your food in line at the McDonald's drive-thru, or perhaps you were having car troubles on the side of the road, and someone offered their assistance. Maybe you did something kind, and you sent a fellow church member a card because you knew they were going through their own personal struggles. I want you to keep that scenario in mind as you listen to the following words that I have to say. Hopefully, my thoughts and philosophies on these heavy subjects I share will resonate with you in some way and help you in your own faith journey.

Did you know that African-American men and men of other races were not allowed to vote in the United States until the passage of the 15th Amendment? Did you know that the 13th Amendment officially abolished slavery in 1865? Though it was ratified, slavery did not end altogether. Even the patriotism and courage shown by the Harlem Hellfighters did not earn them the respect they deserved as Americans. African-Americans came back home after fighting for freedom and liberty abroad, just to come home to realize that their fight for freedom did not include theirs. They came to see the resurgence of the KKK and other white supremacist groups.

African Americans, and other brown skin people came to experience the use of science to sustain racist ideas, and eugenics in the late 19th and earlier 20th centuries served to support the beliefs of white supremacists. Now, what is so Christian about that in a supposedly Godly country?

Hopefully, you've been reading the monthly cloverleaf and have read some of the articles my mother, Wanda Osborne, has written about the presence of racial injustice in our nation. I know some of you may be tired of hearing these topics, and I know some of you love to learn and hear the oppressed and marginalized voices. However, this is something we must talk about as Christians in our faith community.

I want to read an excerpt from one of her writings, where she addressed racism in our country and how it contradicts its Christian principles. She said, "The bible tells us to love our neighbor. I submit to you, that I am your neighbor and yet I am not always loved by fellow Christians. For some Christians, that love is conditional. God's love is unconditional. I ask the question, how can a Christian love God and hate people of color or people who do not look like them? If you believe this country was founded on Godly principles, how can a Christian allow racism, or disapprove of justice for the oppressed?" I believe my mother is absolutely right. Why did the marginalized and the oppressed need amendments and laws to establish their innate rights in the country when white people did not?

What about women and individuals who identify with the LGBTQIA+ community? Imagine a world where heterosexuality would be ridiculed, and it would deny you of your basic rights as a human. Imagine that you were denied medical services or ordinary service that it is your civil right to have, just because you were married to the opposite sex. That would be utterly frustrating and quite unfair, wouldn't it? I am sure several women in this congregation were undermined or weren't given the acknowledgment they deserved, especially in the workplace, due to their gender. Women didn't even gain the right to vote until 1920 with the passage of the 19th Amendment, which as of this summer, was only a century ago. Sexuality is not something you can control, nor is your biological sex at birth, nor your skin color, so why do we judge others for these natural occurrences? Put yourself in their shoes; if you were oppressed to the same degree, you would exhibit outrage and want change. As the video stated, it is God's duty to judge, not ours. We are all sculpted in God's image; why does that make us believe that we can only show conditional love instead of unconditional, just because someone's beliefs do not align with our own? As Christians, there is no reason why race, gender, sexuality, and overall equality should be up for debate.

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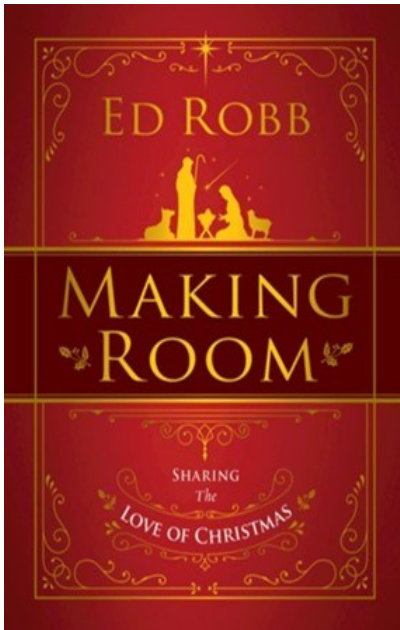
NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Please submit your information or article for the monthly Newsletter in one of the following ways :

- mail or deliver to the church office
- email to ***TUMC@trinityfrederick.org***.

Information for the January 2021 newsletter will be due the second Sunday of December— December 13.

Don't skip having an **ADVENTURE**, especially this year! **Nov. 29 - Dec. 24**



Advent usually means a time of going inward, examining our lives in preparation for the arrival of the Christ child. This year's Advent theme suggests a different focus. As the Holy Family welcomed those who came to them---both shepherds and magi---perhaps we could consider whom we might allow to enter more fully into our own lives this season.

Choose to be intentional about your CHRISTmas preparations.
Advent study classes are happening:

1) **Sunday evenings at 7pm** via zoom with the Open Door class
and 2) **Monday night's at 7pm** via zoom in a pastor-led class.

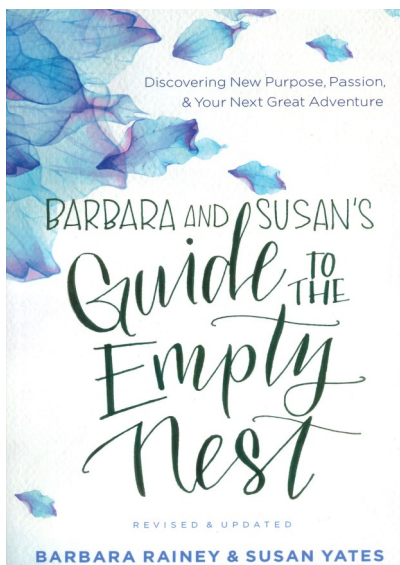
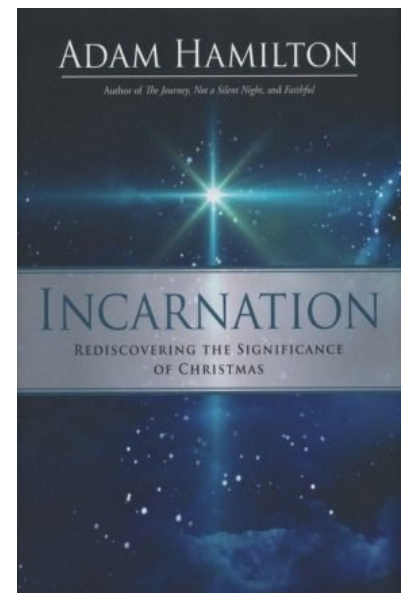
Please visit the website www.trinityfrederick.org to access the zoom class links.

Please note: Books will be available in the black mailbox on the back porch of the church office building on 11/24 and beyond

Women's Bible Advent Study starting Dec. 2 at 9:30am & 7pm

His parents called him Jesus. But the prophets, shepherds, wise men, and angels addressed him by other names---including Messiah, Savior, and Emmanuel. Come explore the meaning behind these titles, what they tell us about the baby whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, and the significance of that Christ child for our lives today.

Please note: study books can be ordered from your favorite online vendors, Christianbook.com, Amazon, etc. Prices vary. Find Zoom links at www.trinityfrederick.org



Trinity Women's Ministry is wondering...

Do you know anyone with an Empty Nest?

Trinity Women's Ministry has a gift we would to mail to anyone you know who is working through the complicated adjustment process that comes when the proverbial nest is empty. If you know some one for whom this would be a blessings, please contact Heather in the office at 301.662.2895.



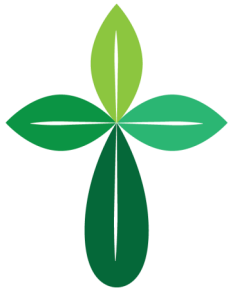
Frederick Foodbank needs non-perishable foods such as canned fruits and vegetables, canned meats and

fishes, juices and drinks, pasta products, canned soups, rice and other staples.

Please consider making a "drop-off" donation to the *Frederick Community Action Agency* located at **100 S Market Street.**

If you have further questions, please contact Chris Bard at 301-600-3972.

TRINITY PASTORAL
COUNSELING CENTER



Advent and the celebration of Christ's birth is one of awe and wonder. Each year is an invitation to find new ways of exploring the story of Jesus' birth. This year COVID-19 needs to be factored in as part of our world's story. Many of us are trying to figure out the if's, and if so how's of sharing Christmas with our loved ones, friends, and community.

Brene' Brown is a researcher on shame, vulnerability, and courage. Her podcasts called "Unlocking Us" started at the beginning of 2020 just before the pandemic hit. Her interviews are one such bright light in the midst of this year's challenges. As I am writing this, I am listening to her interview with Dolly Parton called "Storytelling, Empathy and Shining Our Lights." <https://brenebrown.com/unlockingus/> In many ways, Brown's interviews encourage us to live into our God-given selves with humility and courage.

The thing is, we might not be Brene Brown nor Dolly Parton, but we can listen to others and share our stories with each other. There are many people who need connection. How can we connect while maintaining distance?

Stories can be a kind of medicine for the soul. They can be roadmaps for how to navigate life. Jesus modeled a life of open-hearted courage.

We still tell his story. What's yours? Who in your life has stories needing to be told?

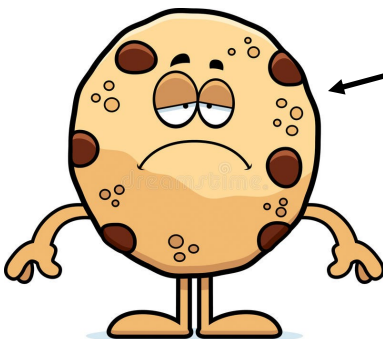
May you and your family be well in all ways. May your story illuminate faith, hope, and love.

Merry Christmas,
Diane Younkings, LCPC, NCC

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Now think back to what I asked you in the beginning; when I told you to think of a time when someone expressed a random act of kindness towards you. What makes it so that you can't express that same compassion to someone who holds different values or different lifestyles as you, and yet a total stranger is deserving of it? Thinking back to the McDonald's example, if you were told that the customer(s) behind you were homosexual couples or Hispanic immigrants, would you still pay for their meal in the drive-thru? God doesn't tell us to pick and choose who we share our generosity and love towards.

Would it be fair if someone decided we were undeserving of their generosity, say because you liked Star Trek, and they like Star Wars? Or maybe because they supported Biden and you supported Trump and vice versa? No, that wouldn't make us feel respected or loved or acknowledged. That's what God asks of us, and if we can't fulfill our one duty as Christians, to spread unconditional love, then we aren't living the way God planned for us.



This is how we all feel about No Cookie Walk this year!!
**But wait... we know how you can feel better and it is
100% CALORIE FREE!!!**

We can have a **PRETEND COOKIE WALK** and
still help all the ministries of Trinity!

Sometime before Sunday, Dec. 13 (*the day we would have been selling the few remaining Cookie Walk cookies in the lobby*), you can make a donation matching what you normally spend making or buying Cookie Walk goodies. Make your check out to Trinity and please memo it "Pretend Cookie Walk" and return it to the church office at 703 West Patrick Street Frederick MD 21701.

Still helping ministries but none of the guilt... remember 100 % calorie free



Trinity United Methodist Church
703 West Patrick Street
Frederick, MD 21701

301-662-2895
tumc@trinityfrederick.org
www.trinityfrederick.org

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

