

Trinity United Church of Christ

3229 York St, PO Box 730,

Manchester, MD 21102

410 374-2727

www.trinityuccmanchester.org

Trinity Times

December 2021

From the Pastor's Desk



I just love surprises. They bring me a special kind of joy. Is there tension? Sure. But the payoff is the excitement of the big reveal. Ask any young child who still believes in Santa Claus, and they'll tell you that December feels *so long*, but it's worth it for the joy of Christmas morning.

It's true that sometimes waiting feels harder than other times. Waiting for news about a medical test is much less fun than waiting to see what's under the Christmas tree. It is especially hard when what we're waiting for is uncertain or may bring sorrow. In the Broadway musical *Hamilton*, Aaron Burr sings a song called "Wait for It," in which he essentially reminds himself that all the good things he's waiting for—personally and professionally—are yet around the corner. He is lying in wait. He is being patient. Waiting for it.

In a very real sense, this is the Christian's duty during Advent. As we near the end of the most challenging two years in collective memory, I'm sure most of us are tired of "waiting" for everything. We want to celebrate the holidays! The tension of Advent, of expectation for the arrival of the joy of Christmas day, feels redundant in this strange time.

And yet, we must wait. Not forever. Just a little bit longer. The Apostle Paul reminds us that there is virtue in patience. God will give us strength to endure. Romans 8:25 reads, "if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." Hope is in the waiting. If hope is there, you can bet God is, too. Even as Mary waited uncertainly for the miracle baby in her belly to spring forth into the world, she drew strength from the assurance of the nearness of God.

In this season of expectation for the blessings of the holiday season, let us be encouraged that we do not run this race alone. While we "wait for it," the Wondrous Creator God, who is love, is moving and working. Whether the holidays bring joy or sorrow, we can gather blessed assurance that the Still Speaking God is faithful. Though he was born a lowly infant in a manger, Jesus is Lord over all that is, was, and is to come. That's good news!

Much is happening at Trinity in the next month. From the Lighting of the Crèche to our Advent Study; *Redemption of Scrooge* worship series to "Christmas Around the World" Discovery Time; Children's church each Sunday in Advent to our Longest Night Service; Christmas Eve celebration to the special December 26th screening of our holiday concert, there's something for everyone. Read on for details. I can't wait to see you all so very soon! Happy Advent and Merry Christmas to all!

Pastor Jessica



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 12/02 – Doug Rhoten
- 12/11 – Laci Saunders
- 12/18 – Doris Phelps
- 12/19 – James Price
- 12/20 – Pastor Jessica Townsley
- 12/27 – Amy Miller

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 01/05 – Earl LaMotte
Douglas Myers
- 01/06 – Claire Vey
- 01/18 – Norman Greenholtz
- 01/20 – Charlene Rhoten
- 01/23 – Nancy Koerner
- 01/24 – David Bailey

Contacting the Pastor and the Church Office

To reach Pastor Jessica in an emergency, please call her at 240-285-9357 (cell).

DAYS OFF SCHEDULE: Pastor Jessica will be off on Friday (her Sabbath day) and Saturday. She plans to be in the church office in November Tuesday and Thursday, but always subject to change. She works from the home office Mondays and Wednesdays.

For non-emergencies, please call the church at (410) 374-2727. Please notify the church of any hospitalizations in the congregation.

Pastor Jessica’s vacation

Pastor will be on vacation starting December 26th thru January 2nd. Contact Robert Miller for pastoral care 410-374-4455.

Church Communications Submission Dates

Sunday Worship bulletin – Wednesday
January Newsletter– Monday, December 20



December Meeting Dates Zoom

Consistory – Wednesday, December 1 @ 7pm
Worship Committee – Tuesday, December 28 @ 6pm



HELPING HANDS DECEMBER

Greeters for the month of December:

Belva LaMotte

December 5

Ushers: Deb Persinger

December 12

Ushers: Deb Persinger

December 19

Ushers: Deb Persinger

December 24

Ushers: Deb Persinger

December 26

Ushers: MB Brainerd

Lay Readers:

- Dec. 05 – Robert Miller
- Dec. 12 – Sue Myers
- Dec. 19 – Marge Bailey
- Dec. 24 – TBA
- Dec. 26 – Amy Schultz

Media Operator:

- Dec. 05 – Karen Haines & MB Brainerd
- Dec. 12 – MB Brainerd & Elwin Wagner
- Dec. 19 – Karen Haines & Sue Myers
- Dec. 24 – Elwin Wagner & Sue Myers
- Dec. 26 – Karen Hines & Sandy Sanders

**Children’s Church Leaders
for the month of December**

Amy Schultz

2022 BUDGET MEETING

We will be holding a brief congregational meeting on Sunday, 12/12/21, immediately following the church service to vote on the 2022 financial budget.

Trinity UCC Covid Protocol

With Covid-19 cases on the rise, primarily due to the new Delta variant, in order to protect the most vulnerable among us, including children who cannot yet be vaccinated and those who are immunocompromised, we strongly urge everyone to **wear a mask inside the building at all times**. We appreciate everyone's understanding, and thank you, as we try to safely navigate through these uncertain and unpredictable times due to this pandemic.

Worship Schedule: December 2021

December 5, 2021 – Second Sunday of Advent, 10:45 a.m.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4, 31; Matthew 4:18-23

Theme: The Remembrance of Christmas Past

Holy Communion

December 12, 2021 – Third Sunday of Advent, 10:45 a.m.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Luke 2:8-20

Theme: The Life of Christmas Present

December 19, 2021 – Fourth Sunday of Advent, 10:45 a.m.

Scripture: Romans 8:4-8; Matthew 11:29-30

Theme: The Hope of Christmas Future

December 21, 2021 – Longest Night Service

Theme: Blue Christmas

May take place via Zoom only

December 24, 2021 – Christmas Eve, 6:30 p.m.

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20

Theme: O Holy Night

Holy Communion

December 26 – 1st Sunday of Christmas, 10:45 a.m.

Theme: A Service of Lessons and Carols

Pastor Parish Relationship Committee

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee plans to meet again in January prior to the annual meeting.



Redemption of Scrooge Worship Series

Beginning November 28, join us each Sunday during Advent as we journey through the Charles Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*. We will discuss how themes from this beloved Christmas story intersect with our own holy scriptures.

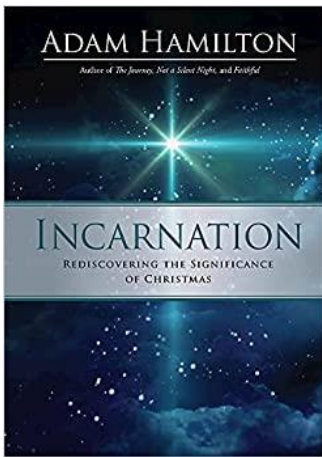


Trinity UCC Christmas Giving Tree 2021

With great joy NESAP has provided us with information on a local family of 5. Mom, Dad twin boys age 6 and younger son age 5 in need of support during this holiday season. Due to Covid instead of setting up the Giving Tree at Church we are asking for monetary donations to the Care Fund to purchase gifts. If you wish to buy a gift and wrap it, please contact me 443-487-1843 for a gift selection and return the gift to church no later than **Sunday, December 19th**. If making a monetary donation, please make the check out to Trinity UCC and note on the bottom of your check for Care Fund Holiday Gifts.

Through work and commitment from our small church community we will give light and bright smiles to these little faces Christmas morning. God Bless and thank you once again for your support.

Debbi Miller



Advent Study: *Incarnation* by Adam Hamilton

Join Pastor Jessica on Zoom **December 2, 9, and 16th** for a brief Advent study of *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*. We will gather at 7pm for three Thursdays to watch a short video and engage in discussion around the themes of the incarnation. If you would like to participate, please contact Pastor Jessica by e-mail or phone. A book is not necessary, but can be ordered if you prefer to follow along.



Longest Night at Trinity UCC

The Longest Night worship service (some churches call it Blue Christmas) originated years ago in churches around the world. The purpose of the service is to acknowledge our need for healing and hope when grief, illness and discord are present in our lives.

This simple service which will be held on Tuesday, **December 21** at 6:30 pm via Zoom. Pastor Jessica will lead a meaningful service which will include silence, quiet music, and words to ponder. Maybe you won't attend for yourself alone, but will bring a friend with you as well? An email with the Zoom link will be e-mailed prior to the 21st.

A Time for Discovery: Christmas Around the World



Join us each Sunday in Advent for a very special "Time for Discovery." Pastor Jessica will offer a special moment in worship during which we will talk briefly about how children in other countries celebrate Christmas! During this time, we will have a special gift for each of our children to mark the Advent and Christmas seasons. You don't want to miss it!



The Christmas Fund Offering

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

First Sunday after Christmas Worship Concert



Join us during worship on **December 26th** for a very special musical service! Our music director, Cammeron Williams, has gathered extraordinary singers and musicians to perform a pre-recorded holiday concert like no other before seen at Trinity UCC. We hope you will join us to see these performances in their entirety!

November 2021 Consistory Meeting Highlights

Previous Minutes: October 06, 2021 minutes were accepted

Pastor's Report: Pastor Jessica shared her detailed report. Worship is planned through end of year. People have expressed interest in December 2, 9, 16 advent study being held via Zoom

Treasurer's report: October report was submitted by Sue Myers. The T Rowe Price accounts were updated 10-31-2021 with earnings of \$57,000 for the year. She reported we were short \$57,00 in our budget. Included in that was \$30,000 spent for capital expenses, roof, copier and boiler repair.

Committee Reports

Property: The fire alarm ground repair needs a computer part, expected cost is \$800-\$1,000. Doug Rhoten will follow up speaking to someone about installing altar handrails.

Finance: Proposed budget information was reviewed. Sue Myers noted property/liability insurance is expected to increase, the proposed budget includes a 15% increase, but it could be more. The proposed budget has an expected deficiency of \$74,000. We discussed doing a capital campaign and looking at other options to increase income- possibly renting out space

Personnel: No Report

Evangelism: No Report

Christian Education: Christian Ed committee will be meeting soon.

Worship: A written report from committee's November 1st meeting was submitted. Around 20 pets were blessed on October 10th. Cammeron has submitted receipts for the musicians and expenses related to Christmas program. Next meeting will be on Monday, November 29, 2021

Caring Ministry: NESAP will be providing us with information on a family to adopt for Christmas.

PPR: Pastor Jessica shared a letter written that will be sent out in hopes of reconnecting with members. Next meeting will be January 26, 2022.

Unfinished Business

2022 Consistory Members: Karen Haines term as Elder will expire at end of 2021, MB Brainerd is rotating off consistory.

Latest Covid Protocols: We plan to keep our protocols in place.

Black Friday / Lighting of Crèche, Pastor Jessica will provide a gospel reading and will turn on the light switch.

New Business

Christmas Eve Service of lessons and carols will begin at 6:30.

Congregational Meeting will be held January 30, 2021.

Nativity Sharing: Consistory approved lending some crèche pieces (large pieces displayed on choir loft) to Ellen Nash to share in a display at St David's Lutheran Church in Hanover on Saturday, November 20th.

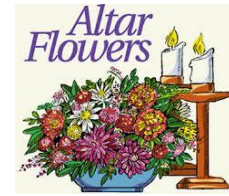
Next Meeting: Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 at 7:00 pm via zoom





Food Bags for Backpacks
2021-2022 School Year

Trinity UCC has restarted our Food Bags for Backpacks donation program for Manchester Elementary School. Trying to be as careful as possible, we will once again just ask for Monetary Donations. Please mark "Food Bags" on any checks or giving envelopes that you wish to go to this program. Thank you, your support is greatly appreciated.



Dedicating Flowers as a Part of Worship
There are a number of options for dedicating flowers in honor of a loved one, and having the flowers placed on the Altar and/or elsewhere in the Sanctuary:

- ✚ A vase of arranged flowers
- ✚ A single rose in a bud vase
- ✚ Cut flowers that you will bring in and arrange in a vase

Please sign up on the flower dedication sign-up sheet that is pinned to the bulletin board in the lower narthex and specify your selection. Diane, the church secretary, will call you to arrange the flower order. If you want to bring cut flowers to be placed on the altar rather than order an arrangement from one of the local florists that will make a flower delivery to the church, please contact a member of our altar committee - Deb Persinger at 410-746-5475 or Sandy Sanders at 443-974-6723. For more information regarding ordering and dedicating flowers please call Diane, the church secretary, at 410-374-2727. Thank you!!



SCRIP GIFT CARDS

With the holidays approaching, what better time to support Trinity UCC! Use gift cards to make your on-line holiday purchases safer! Plus buy gift cards to give as presents to those that are hard-to-buy-for. With almost 300 retailers you shouldn't have a problem finding what you want.

For the holiday season we will be placing gift card orders on 12/5, and 12/12. If you haven't participated in the program and would like more information please contact Sue Myers, 443-375-6788, wsmdem@comcast.net



Announcement:

Join Pastor Jessica on "Facebook LIVE" each **Tuesday and Thursday at 8 a.m.** for a short devotional or thought for the day and prayer time together.

It's a great way to connect to community throughout the week!

Facebook –

www.facebook.com/ManchesterUCC



NEEDS FOR NESAP

Instant Potatoes, Jell-O, Pudding, Stuffing, Mixed Veggies, Applesauce, Helper, Canned Chicken, Soups, Canned Potatoes, Gravy, Breakfast Bars, Juice/Drinks, Jelly, Pasta Sides, Canned Fruit, Brownie Mix, Breakfast Bars, Cake Mix/Frosting, Muffin mix, Mac & Cheese, Laundry Detergent, Dish Soap, Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, Shampoo, Diapers Sizes 4,5,6



Christian Education

December 2021 Newsletter Christian Education

Children's Church

Amy Schultz will be leading Children's Church for every Sunday in our Advent season 2021.

Advent begins on November 28, 2021 and EVERY Sunday until Christmas the young people will explore Hope, Love, Joy and Peace in conjunction with the lighting of the candles of the Advent wreath.

The Community Rock Garden launched on October 17, 2021. The Cross garden has 2 trays to place rocks in, anyone can make one or take one. Now known as Rocktober and Rockvember; the time to put our artistry to work.

There is a rocker and mat in the back of the sanctuary for small ones who need a quiet space to remain in worship.

We will be creating worship bags for each child for the opposite weeks of children's church. The bags will have a craft that can be completed in the pew during service and other unique items (age appropriate). Stay tuned for the full information and the month they will be available in 2022.

We welcome anyone who would like to assist and contribute time to our youth and the special times we are planning. Please contact Leslie Brooks or Amy Schultz via the new mailbox for the group and we will answer your questions, give you information, etc.

TrinityChristianEducation2727@gmail.com



Deb Seal-Miller's 15-year-old granddaughter Savannah Seal is taking a class in school called JROTC and they are doing a "Toys for Tots" collection for the US Marine Corps Holiday Program; Savannah asked if she could put a toy collection box in church.

If you are able would like to purchase an inexpensive toy to support "Toys for Tots" you can drop it off in the collection box beneath the table located in the front main entrance of the church. Toys need to be new and in original packaging. Our collection will end on Thursday, December 16th giving Savannah time to get them to the location where the Marine Corp will then take the new toys giving them to children (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, or JROTC, is a high school elective program whose mission is to teach students citizenship, leadership, character, and community service. The core values are at the heart of JROTC, whose creed emphasizes working to better the cadet's family, school, and country) Savannah loves being involved with JROTC and is very excited to help families in need and wants to thank TUCC. If you have any questions, please give Deb a call 443-487-1843 or e-mail Deb at catsigreen@gmail.com and note in the subject Toys for Tots... Thank you and God Bless

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather or other unforeseen emergencies, the decision to close the church will be made two hours before worship/meetings/workday begin. You can find out whether or not the building will be open in the following possible ways:

1. Calling the church at 410 374-2727 (The voice mail message will reflect the decision to close or remain open.)
2. Checking your email. (Those with email will receive a message.)
3. Listening to WBAL 1090 AM
4. Receiving a call through the phone tree

Trinity United Church of Christ
Receipts and Disbursements

	Oct 21	Jan - Oct 21
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Communion Offering	60.00	590.00
Loose Offering	40.00	402.00
Miscellaneous	10.00	1,195.00
Regular Offering	5,175.00	51,267.14
VBS Donations (Educational)	0.00	25.00
	5,285.00	53,479.14
Total Income		
Expense		
Educational Ministries	0.00	447.06
Evangelism	200.00	821.41
General	1,160.54	23,143.39
Personnel	6,154.17	72,404.73
Property	0.00	3,042.56
Music	0.00	277.00
Worship	150.00	907.31
	7,664.71	101,043.46
Total Expense		
Net Ordinary Income	(2,379.71)	(47,564.32)
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Grant Income	0.00	15,448.00
Care Fund Activity	0.00	100.00
Endowment	0.00	550.73
Cemetery	(600.00)	(5,453.50)
Interest/Dividend Income	0.00	1,594.38
Fundraising	351.81	(22,739.08)
Special Offerings Received	240.00	2,210.00
	(8.19)	(8,289.47)
Total Other Income		
Other Expense		
Special Offerings Disbursed	107.90	1,455.13
Transfers	0.00	0.00
	107.90	1,455.13
Total Other Expense		
Net Other Income	(116.09)	(9,744.60)
Net Income	(2,495.80)	(57,308.92)

December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Church office: Open 9- 1 pm Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Always subject to change.			1 Consistory 7pm	2 Advent Study 7pm	3	4
5 Second Sunday of Advent Holy Communion Worship 10:45 am Children's Church	6	7	8	9 Advent Study 7pm	10	11
12 Third Sunday of Advent Worship 10:45 am Blessing of Prayer Shawls Blessing of Foodbags	13 January Newsletter articles due	14	15	16 Advent Study 7pm	17	18 Longest Night Trinity UCC Church By zoom 6:30 p.m.
19 Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship 10:45 am Children's Church Christmas Fund Offering	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve.	25 Christmas Day 
26 First Sunday After Christmas Worship 10:45 am	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	

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ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED



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