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December 2020  
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## News From Pastor Ryan:

### ADVENT: A SEASON OF HOPE

Hello Church,

As you are reading this we enter the church season of Advent. I have been praying and reflecting on what this period means for us in 2020. Traditionally, Advent is a time of preparation and of waiting. This year is hard for me not to relate. All around me now people are making plans for the days when Covid-19 is a thing of the past. I have heard people share all the things they cannot wait to do when this period is over. We are all waiting for what we pray is a better future. Many have even found hope. New vaccines, new treatments are all beginning to open the very real possibility that this will soon be behind us. But, in this moment, we wait. We wait with eager expectation for the good news that is coming but has not yet arrived.

In this way, I wonder if this Advent season could be the most powerful and impactful many of us will experience in our lifetime. What other set of circumstances will we ever face that will so personally parallel the people of Israel waiting for God's savior. While we might face darker winters as individuals, it seems unlikely we will ever face a more grueling year as a collective. We await a cure for a disease of the body, the Israelites were awaiting a cure for the soul.

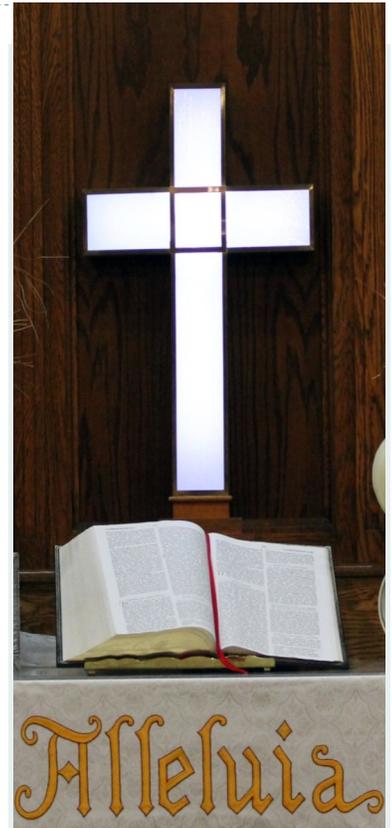
I find myself reflecting on the 400-year gap between the Old Testament texts and the arrival of Jesus. We often use the metaphor of winter to describe this time. The people of God must have felt left out in the cold. God who has been so personally connected to their lives in Jerusalem and the Temple, now He seems to have gone silent. All they were left with was the hope that the savior was still coming. The promises would still be fulfilled. God was still good.

It's very difficult in the darkest and coldest days of winter to remember how the light feels. It might be difficult for us this Advent to remember how community feels. I know I've struggled with plans I have for my family and for the church. So much of it centered around people being together, doing new things, out in the community. And yet, this year...we must wait. We might feel alone in the darkness. Separated from what God has called us to do. On the darkest days, we might even feel separated from God entirely. But, this is not true. The promises of God carry on! The Kingdom work is still ongoing. I pray in these difficult days you will take a few moments to reflect on our hope in this season. Jesus Christ is restoring all things, not just the physical, but the spiritual. We must place our faith and trust in Him. Then, we can become true Children of God.

Think about how much brighter we can make these dark days if you and I carry just a little bit of God's light with us. If we don't surrender to the cynicism, bitterness, anger, or sadness we see around us. Easier said than done, I know. Yet, Advent continues to remind us to keep the ember of hope alive like tending a fire in winter. Let us be nurturing, gentle, and caring with one another and pray each day more and more for God's light to shine among us.

*The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*  
*John 1:9-12*

-Pastor Ryan



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- December 6th—7:30 am  
Men's Breakfast
- December 14th—7:00pm  
Church Council
- December 21st—7:00pm  
Blue Christmas
- December 24th— 7:00pm  
Christmas Eve Service

We have created a direct link on our website for our weekly services!

If Facebook would happen to have any issues, please use the link below to find the service.

[http://  
www.trinityelliston.org/  
livestream.html](http://www.trinityelliston.org/livestream.html)

## WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION

### SONGS OF THE SEASON

11/29- O Come O Come Emmanuel

12/6- O Come All Ye Faithful

12/13- Away in a Manger

12/20- Joy to the World

## TABLE & CHAIR SIGN-OUT

Just a reminder with holidays and family gathering season upon us, the sign out sheet for the tables and chairs is located in the closet across from the office.

Please contact the office to make sure you are on the list for the date you would like the tables and chairs.

The ONLY tables that are to leave the building are the older wooden style tables. The ONLY chairs that are to leave the building are the wooden chairs. The tables and chairs that can be taken out, are all located in the shed.

## HALL USE RESERVATIONS

There are forms on the wall next to the calendar. You are now required to fill out a form for any event that you would like to have in the church (including any rollover event for holiday parties-rollover dates will be allowed, but we would like the forms filled out as well). Please do not just write it on the calendar any more. Once it is reviewed, it will be added to the calendar. If you have any questions, please contact Rhonda.

## MEMORIAL THANK YOU

### Memorial Thank You

Our deepest sympathy goes out to the families of Evelyn Schimming, Glenn Sager, & Lavonna Bittner. We would like to thank the following for their memorials given in her name.

Jan & Dawn Greiger & Marilyn Appelhans



## MEDICAL LENDING SUPPLIES

It has been wonderful to see the medical supplies donated to Trinity. The basement kitchen area is nearly overflowing, thanks to all of you.

That being said, it also bears repeating that those items are available for YOUR use! There are a few wheelchairs, arm slings, compression stockings, and even a shower bag for a cast, to name a few. How about a massage cushion? Some items might come in handy for first aid such as Ace warps and Band-Aids. So please think of TUCC for yourselves or those loved ones in times of need. Ask any of our medical professionals for help if needed. Thanks! Robin Hansen.

## THE LONGEST NIGHT

An increasing number of churches are holding special services each year for the Longest Night of the Year. A Longest Night of the Year Service is a deeply meaningful way a church can companion those who struggle during the holiday season as well as acknowledge the pain experienced by many in their community and world-wide. On this night, we will gather together to acknowledge our shared grief. For some, this will be the loss of a loved one. For others, it will be depression or loneliness made worse by the holidays. This year, many will be grieving the loss of normalcy and independence that has come in the season of Covid-19. Whatever troubles your heart this year, we seek to create a space for you to confront your grief and turn it over to a God who cares. We will join in a collective lament for our pain and loss and turn our eyes to the future. A future where our hope remains in Jesus Christ.

## CHRISTMAS EVE & THE LONGEST NIGHT NOTE

As of this printing we are moving forward with the plan to hold in person worship services for Christmas Eve on 12/24 and the Longest Night on 12/21.

Both of these services and the circumstances around them are subject to change based on Covid-19 policy changes. Please keep alert for updates.

## THANK YOU

“Thank you so much for your donation to the Elmore Food Pantry. The generosity of people like you is what feeds our hungry neighbors. Your donation is appreciated by all of us who volunteer at the pantry, and by those whom we serve. May you be blessed in your giving.”

~Elmore Food Pantry

## BRANCHING OUT NEWS

### TEACHERS

| Date   | 2-3 Nursery | PreK Teacher | K-2 Teacher |
|--------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Week 1 | Rebecca R.  | Desirae M.   | Kylene L.   |
| Week 2 | Faith S.    | Brittany W.  | Janene L.   |
| Week 3 | Jen L.      | Ashley G.    | Ashley Z.   |
| Week 4 | LouAnn Z.   | Casi J.      | Jamie K.    |

THRIVE Teachers: Dan G., Nyla D., Jan C.

# Christian Education News!!!!



Men's Breakfast Is Back!!!! Men are invited to join us on Sunday, December 6th at 7:30am. If you are interested in serving a meal, or would like more information, please contact Ed G.

### TITHE.LY

Giving to your local church using [Tithe.ly](http://Tithe.ly) is super easy! We offer a number of different ways to give to your church, which we'll outline in this article.

#### #1 - GIVE ON YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE

The recommended way to give is to go through your church's website. They likely have a section titled "Giving" or "Online Giving" where you can give using the Tithe.ly platform. If they do not have that, you can use one of the methods listed below.

#### #2 - GIVE ONLINE

If you're on a computer (or any device with an internet connection), you can easily give to your church by heading to [Tithe.ly/Give](http://Tithe.ly/Give). Once there, search for your church, and fill in the giving form.

#### #3 - GIVE IN APP

Want to give to your church using the convenience of your smartphone? No problem! Download the Tithe.ly App from the [App Store](https://www.apple.com/app-store) (iPhone) or [Google Play Store](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.give) (Android). Once you've downloaded the app, create an account or log in, locate your church and tap "Give Now" to complete your gift!

### From Trinity Tidings of Years Gone

By —

December 1945

We are happy indeed to announce that our installation of the church organ has now proceeded to the point where we can joyfully complete plans for its dedication. The time for this happy event has been set for Sunday, December 23 at 10:30am.

Because of necessary adjustments to be made on the organ during the next few months, we shall forego the pleasure of hearing this instrument in a special concert until next spring. We shall, however, print the list of contributors to the Organ Fund along with the dedication program.

Your church council and your pastor wish to extend a word of thanks to all who made a contribution to our Organ Fund, or helped in any other way to bring about the installation of this organ. It is our prayer and hope that this instrument may lead us and future generations of our church into a closer communion with our God and Savior through the beauty an the ministry of church and music

# Church Council Minutes

The Trinity United Church of Christ, Elliston Church Council met on Monday, October 12th, 2020. At 7:00 pm. Nyla Denman, President, called meeting to order, and Pastor Ryan Shields opened with prayer. Those in attendance were as follows:

President Nyla Denman, Vice President Desirae McCloskey, Faith Sutter, Bonnie Weaver, Marty Hoeft, Ed Gahler, Nate Diekman, Brad Jess, Jayson Hayes, Pastor Ryan Shields, and Church Secretary Rhonda Mahaney were present. Jim Buhro, Eric Gahler, and Troy Wittman were absent.

## **Reports:**

**Recording Secretary:** Meeting minutes from the September council meeting were read prior to the meeting by members. Motion to accept the minutes were made by first Ed Gahler, second by Marty Hoeft, MC.

## **Secretary Report:**

Photo Directory Update

Edited on proof of the directory and sent back for printing

PPP Loan forgiveness application has been submitted

Bank has communicated that we are still waiting to hear back, but we have everything done that we needed to do

Boilers part has been replaced and they are all ready to go

## **Financial Report:**

Need to set up a budget meeting for October to prepare for new year budget

Review of current budget was made by present council members

Approval of financial report by first Desirae McCloskey, and second by Nate Diekman, MC.

## **Pastor Report:**

Worship

Church attendance has been must better recently. Trying to find new ways to track attendance. For the last month we've had 60-90 in person and 30-45 watching online. We've started to track these as one number.

Communion served at home and in person on October 4<sup>th</sup>

Baptism held for Elsie Kay Sutter on 9/20

Weddings for Troy and Hannah Vantrease, Michael and Keriann Sager, and Devin and Marissa Longeway in the past month.

Funeral services held for Evelyn Schimming on 9/25

Funeral services held for Glenn Sager on 9/15

Events/Activities

Branching Out and THRIVE meet and are doing well

Started "The Deep Dive" an after church conversation where people can interact with the lesson of the day and Scripture. About a dozen of a variety of ages week one.

4 Church Family Night @ The Drive In: Partnering

with at least one other local church to rent out Sundance Kid Drive In on Monday October 5<sup>th</sup>. Partnered with St. John's Genoa for the Drive In on 10/5. We counted around 50 cars, which gave us an estimate somewhere between 125-150 people in attendance! Seemed like people has a lot of fun!

TUCC 101 Class: Held on 9/23. A few folks in attendance and participating online. A good conversation about the history if the denomination and the church. Well received for the small group that participated.

BooFest TUCC HUNT: A family scavenger hunt activity as a replacement for BooFest is coming up starting October 25<sup>th</sup>. Families will have all week to solve clues, take creative pictures, and earning points. Winners will receive an Ultimate Family Night prize pack. Should be fun.

Attended Missions Meeting on 10/7:

Missions Highlights:

BooFest TUCC Hunt Planning

Food Drive for Local Food

Pantries

Better reporting to congregation on Missions successes

Working with Elmore

Community Thanksgiving

Pastoral Ministries

Visitation ministries are still mostly accomplished by phone and text. Many needs in the church the last month.

Communion given to those watching services separately on Monday morning

Busy month with two funerals, a baptism, and three weddings

Still reconnecting with those who haven't been back and those who have visitation needs

Check in's via Facebook, E-mail, and phone calls with members/friends of the church

E-Mail prayer chain connecting with 43 current subscribers

Completed Boundary Training for the Heartland UCC on 10/1

## **Committee Reports:**

### **Worship Team**

Meeting this month

### **EFY- Branching Out & THRIVE**

Meeting this month

### **Mission**

See mission highlights above in Pastor's Report

### **Trustee Report**

Working on gathering quotes

Repairing roof

Calling about an old quote we received for replacing

lights in the gym  
Matt Perry to plow parking lot this winter

**Pastoral Relations Committee**

Nothing new at this time

**Church and Ministry**

Met to discuss employee evaluations

**2030 Team**

Meeting in November

**Old Business:**

No new update on easement

**New Business:**

Looked at barn next to church

Brainstorming ideas

2030 Team to discuss in November

meeting

**General Operating Fund  
Report (approved)**

|                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Beginning 10/1/20 | \$45,574.91 |
| Offering/Income   | \$11,408.12 |
| Expenses          | \$7,132.00  |
| Balance 10/31/20  | \$49,851.03 |

Pastor Ryan and Rhonda were excused to discuss church and ministries recommendations  
Motion to adjourn meeting by first Faith Sutter and second by Jayson Hayes, MC.  
Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm by Nyla Denman.  
Respectfully submitted, Faith Sutter, Recording Secretary.



The Women's Fellowship met following the church service on Sunday, November 8th, 2020. We have not met since March 12, the day everything started being cancelled at the beginning of the pandemic. We thought about disbanding, but decided not to at this time. We have lost four of our group this year in death.

We wanted to give our Holiday donations, so a motion was made by Sara, seconded by Vi and carried, that we give \$50 each to Grace Community Center, Cherry Street Mission Ministries, Salvation Army, and Ottawa County Holiday Bureau. Total of \$200.00. Then give \$100 each to our four food pantries in area Oak Harbor, Zion, Woodmore and Genoa. Total of \$400.00.

Norma has had the Sunshine bag since July and has sent over thirty cards. Eva H. is taking it at this time and will be chairman.

We might try to get together in the summer for fellowship.

Submitted by: Suzanne Buhro, Secretary



**Christmas Poinsettias**

In Memory of Ina David from the David family

In Memory of Bill & Janet Bilyk from Lee and Tracey David

Thank you for the purchase of Poinsettias for our altar.

## DECEMBER MISSION SPOTLIGHT

The Mission Spotlight for December is our annual Angel Tree outreach. Our recipients are a mother and two children from Genoa. The mother was recently diagnosed with relapse of her breast cancer. Her cancer is now metastatic and she will need to be on chemotherapy for the rest of her life. She is unable to work at this time due to her health. Her son is 6 and in kindergarten at Genoa Elementary. Daughter is 4 and in preschool.

The Angel Tree is set up at church outside the church office. You can also review the items and sign up online as you are able so we can give this family a Merry Christmas.

If you are unable to shop, monetary donations are welcome. We will use monetary donations to purchase coordinating bedroom decor for the kids as well as purchase any remaining items and gift cards.

For monetary donations you can contact the church or Veronica  
419-346-6767

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

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