



Christmas 2022

Trinity Connected

A Simple Story

Submitted by Rev. Ian Mackay

Here is a simple story, simply told. It's about a little boy. His grandfather was there at home with him. The little fellow was in his playpen, jumping up and down, and crying at the top of his voice. He looked at his grandfather, reached out to him and said, pleadingly, "Out! Grandpa, out!" As grandpa reached down to lift him up out of his playpen, the parents insisted the child had to stay where he was as punishment for doing something wrong. For a while, grandpa didn't know what to do. Eventually though, he came up with an idea and happily acted on it. He reached down, untied his shoes and took them off. Then, he climbed into the playpen and sat down beside his grandson. At once, the little fellow stopped crying. He felt safe and secure once again.

This is a picture of what Christmas says to me and what it means to me. I see dear grandfather God reaching down, untying his shoes, taking them off and stepping into the world to be with us in a brand new way. This is a simple and graphic way of understanding the mystery of incarnation; Emanuel: God with us.



For
God so
loved the
world He gave
His one and only
Son that whoever
believes in Him shall not
perish but have eternal life
John
3:16

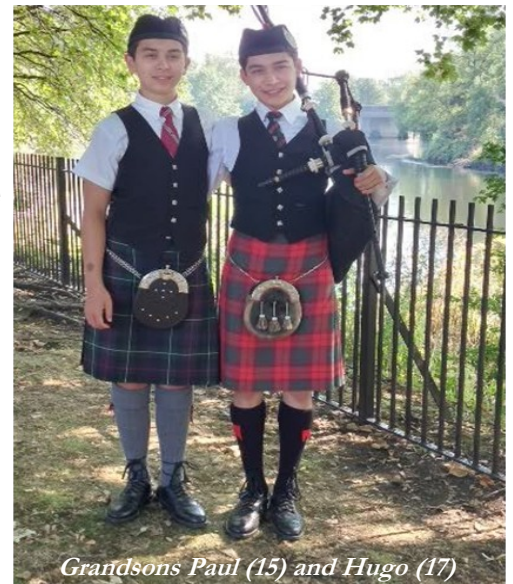
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A Special Trip for Us

Submitted by Jane Mackay

As many of you know, our grandsons are very much involved in playing the bagpipes. Several years ago, plans were being made for their pipe bands to participate in the world piping competition held in Glasgow, Scotland. Initially their plans were to take part in the 2020 championships, but because of Covid 19 they were cancelled. However, this year the competition was reinstated and both our grandsons were able to compete with their respective bands. What better motivation did the Mackay family need to travel to Scotland as well. And so we did not just the kids, but their parents, their grandparents (us) and their Mackay aunt, uncles and cousin all of the immediate clan. Having our whole family together again made it so very, very special for us even if we all had to go to Scotland to do it! The competitions were very exciting. Hugo's school band took first place in their category while Paul's band came 14th out of 23 bands, not bad, considering they were all under 18 years and all the other bands were adults of all ages.



Grandsons Paul (15) and Hugo (17)

The second highlight of our trip was to take a tour of the highlands to learn a little more of the part of Scotland where Ian's Mackay Clan family originated. We were now reduced to six people as our grandsons and their parents returned home. We rented a van and drove a loop around the most northern part of the Scottish mainland, enjoying great weather, beautiful scenery and narrow roads! We stayed in lovely BnB's and even our 5 year old granddaughter, Fiona, was a great traveller.



Beautiful beaches along the North Sea coastline

It was a wonderful time together and created memories which for us, will last forever.

*"For he himself is our peace,
who has made us both one
and has broken down in his flesh
the dividing wall of hostility."*

Ephesians 2:14



Wishing **everyone** who has celebrated and will celebrate a birthday in the upcoming months a very happy birthday!

**Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you.
May God's richest blessings**

Inez Dart	December 2 nd
Shirley Ellison	December 17 th
Kathleen Goodfellow	January 13 th
John McDougall	January 17 th
Ann McDougall	February 6 th

Great Christmas Quotes

Submitted by Sheila Anthony

"A lovely thing about Christmas is that it's compulsory, like a thunderstorm, and we all go through it together." - *Garrison Keillor*

"Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime." - *Laura Ingalls Wilder*

"One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas Day. Don't clean it up too quickly." - *Andy Rooney*

"Remember, if Christmas isn't found in your heart, you won't find it under a tree." - *Chalotte Carpenter*

"Christmas is a bridge. We need bridges as the river of time flows past. Today's Christmas should mean creating happy hours for tomorrow and reliving those of yesterday." - *Gladys Bagg Taber*

"And that, of course, is the message of Christmas. We are never alone. Not when the night is darkest, the wind coldest, the world seemingly most indifferent..." - *Taylor Caldwell*

"Christmas Eve was a night of song that wrapped itself about you like a shawl. But it warmed more than your body. It warmed your heart...filled it, too, with melody that would last forever." - *Bess Streeter Aldrich*

"God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If He gives us the gift of Christmas, it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it." - *Pope Francis*

"Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world." - *C.S. Lewis*

"We consider Christmas as the encounter, the great encounter, the historical encounter, the decisive encounter, between God and mankind. He who has faith knows this truly; let him rejoice." - *Pope Paul VI*





Church Finances

Submitted by Don Coleman



Here are our church finances to date (November 22, 2022):

Local Expenses - Our income for this period was \$66,990.40. Our expenses for the same period was \$89,799.56 leaving us with a shortfall of \$22,809.16. We had a carryover of \$24,059.53 from 2021 leaving us with a balance of \$1,250.37.

Mission & Service - Our givings to Mission and Service for the same period was \$7,483.50. We are currently at 62% of our projected target for 2022 at \$12,000.

Christmas Food Hampers - At this point, we have received \$525 in donations for our Christmas Hampers

We thank all those who have supported us over the past eleven months either through PAR, etransfers and Sunday offerings. We look forward to your continuing support.

Faith

Submitted by Rev. Ian Mackay

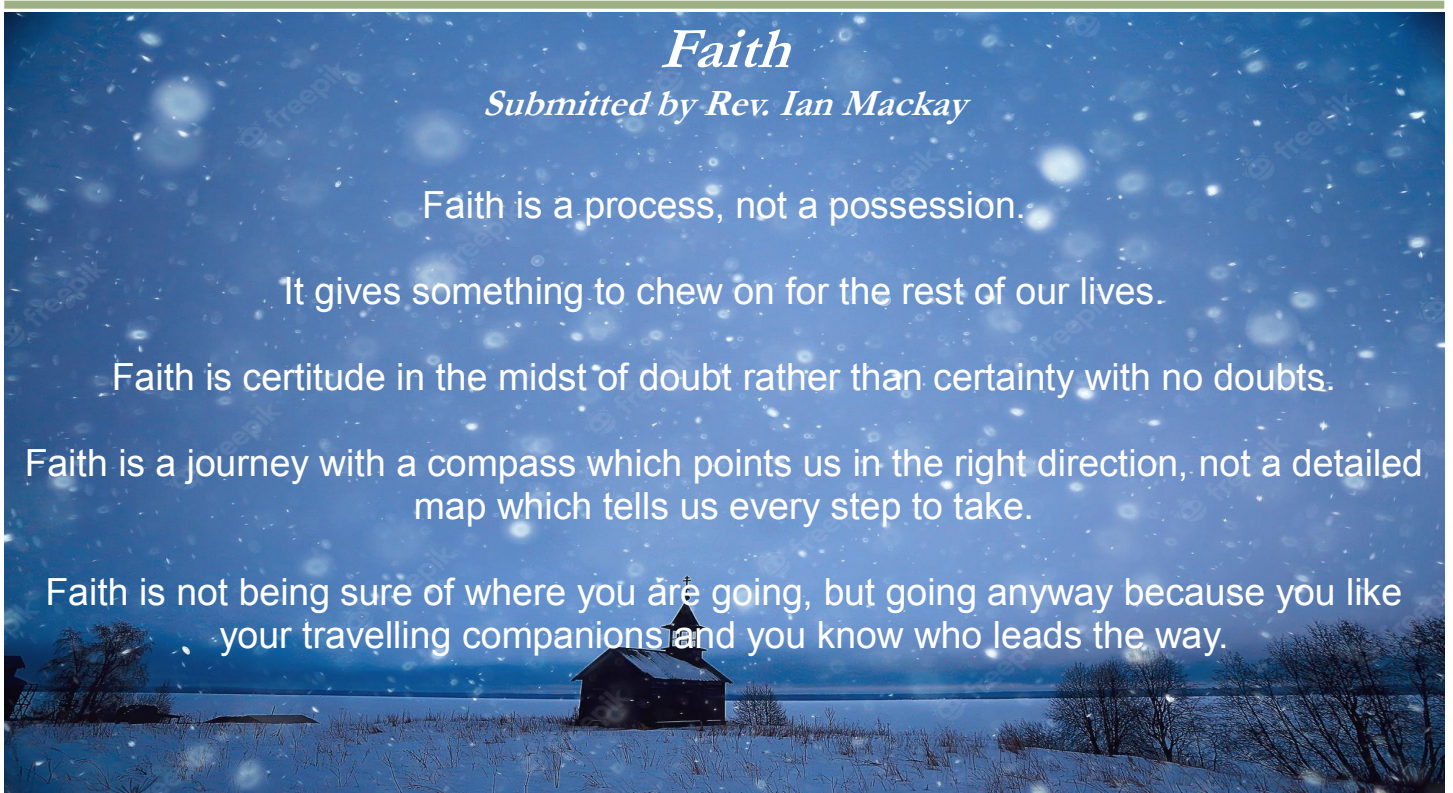
Faith is a process, not a possession.

It gives something to chew on for the rest of our lives.

Faith is certitude in the midst of doubt rather than certainty with no doubts.

Faith is a journey with a compass which points us in the right direction, not a detailed map which tells us every step to take.

Faith is not being sure of where you are going, but going anyway because you like your travelling companions and you know who leads the way.



Trinity Sharing Cupboard

Submitted by Sheila Anthony

What started as a little idea has grown into a well-stocked food cupboard that will serve many families in our area.

Your weekly donations of food are much appreciated as we all know that need is not limited to just the Christmas season. Starting in January the cupboard will be open once a month for families to access.

What we do makes a difference!



CONCERTS IN THE VILLAGE

We are pleased to announce that
our annual concert series is back for the season.

All concerts will be *held at Trinity United Church* (6689 Road 38 Verona)

Admission is by free will donation, as well as a contribution
of a non-perishable food item to benefit the local food bank.

Come and enjoy the sounds of the season.

Trinity Christmas Choir

Date: Friday December 9th

Time: 7:30pm

Community Youth Choir

Date: Friday December 16th

Time: 7pm

Christmas Food Hamper Campaign 2022

Submitted by Session

Because of the amazing generosity of our congregation, 25 Food Hampers and Gift Cards will be delivered to local families on Monday December 12th between 9 and 11am.

Our perishable food items will be purchased from Verona Foodland once again, and we thank them for continuing to be such strong partners in this outreach. At the back of the church sanctuary for the next few weeks, there will be lists where you can sign up to either help with the packing of the hampers or the delivery.

The Hamper Campaigns are clear examples of us living our faith! Thank you for all you do!



The Road Ahead

Submitted by John McDougall

We have held three congregational gatherings since deciding at our Annual Congregational Meeting on March 27th to begin to look at our church's future.

The September meeting focused on the realities of our small rural community church in a time of an aging, declining membership. In spite of COVID, we have maintained our financial stability and the maintenance of our building. Rentals are beginning to catch up with pre-pandemic levels.

The October discussion, chaired by Ian Mackay, recognized that churches must continue to focus on spirituality, our personal satisfaction as members and kind, dignified and valued interpersonal relationships.

Our last session in November, led by Rev. Catherine, asked us identify our natural talents as a congregation and to begin to form a vision of what we can do now and in the near future. We discussed what we are good at and how we can maintain a balance between our social and community needs and our spiritual role.

More detailed notes of these gatherings are posted by the secretary, Marg Smith, at the back of the church.

The next session in January will change to small group discussions with focused questions.

Thank you all for your thoughtful involvement in this series.



The Prophecy

Day 1: Isaiah 9:2-7
Day 2: Isaiah 11:1-5
Day 3: Isaiah 7:10-14
Day 4: Micah 5:1-5
Day 5: 2 Samuel 7:12-16

The Messiah is Born

Day 6: Luke 1:26-33
Day 7: Luke 1:34-38
Day 8: Luke 1:46-55
Day 9: Matthew 1:18-25
Day 10: Luke 2:1-7
Day 11: Luke 2:8-12
Day 12: Luke 2:13-20
Day 13: Matthew 1:1-17

A Season of *Advent* Reading Plan

The Gift of Salvation

Day 14: Romans 6:20-23
Day 15: Galatians 4:1-7
Day 16: 1 Timothy 1:15-17
Day 17: Titus 3:3-7
Day 18: Philippians 2:6-8

The Messiah Will Return

Day 19: John 14:1-6
Day 20: Daniel 7:13-14
Day 21: Revelation 1:4-7
Day 22: Revelation 3:20-22
Day 23: Revelation 22:12-13
Day 24: Revelation 22:16-17
Day 25: Revelation 22:20



Holiday Truffle Cookie Balls

Submitted by Rebecca Peters

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup plus 9 tbsps heavy cream, divided
- 1 (11 ounce) bag, plus 3 cups white chocolate chips, divided
- 2 oz cream cheese, at room temperature
- 32 Voortman Gingerbread cookies, finely crushed (2 1/2 cups crumbs)
- Holly sprinkles for decorating

Directions:

1. Heat 1/2 cup cream in a medium saucepan over low heat until bubbles form around edges, 1-2 minutes; remove from heat. Add 11 ounce bag of chocolate chips and let sit 2 minutes; whisk until smooth. Whisk in cream cheese. Fold in cookie crumbs until combined. Transfer to a bowl and chill until firm, 2 hours or overnight.
2. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Roll mixture into tablespoon-sized balls; transfer to baking sheet. Freeze until firm, 35-40 minutes.
3. Microwave remaining 9 tbsps cream and 3 cups of chocolate chips in a microwave-safe bowl on high for 1 minute. Whisk until smooth. Dip truffles in melted chocolate, tapping off excess, and place on a prepared baking sheet. Immediately place a holly sprinkle on top. Let sit.



The graphic features a blue and green background with white snowflakes and a city skyline silhouette at the bottom. The text is centered and reads:

TRINITY
Christmas
SERVICE TIMES

Christmas Eve Service Saturday December 24th at 5:30pm
(Rev. Catherine Oxenford-Grant)

Christmas Day Sunday December 25th No Service

New Year's Day Service Sunday January 1st at 10am
(Sheila Anthony)

A Prayer of Christmas Hope

Submitted by Rev. Catherine Oxenford-Grant

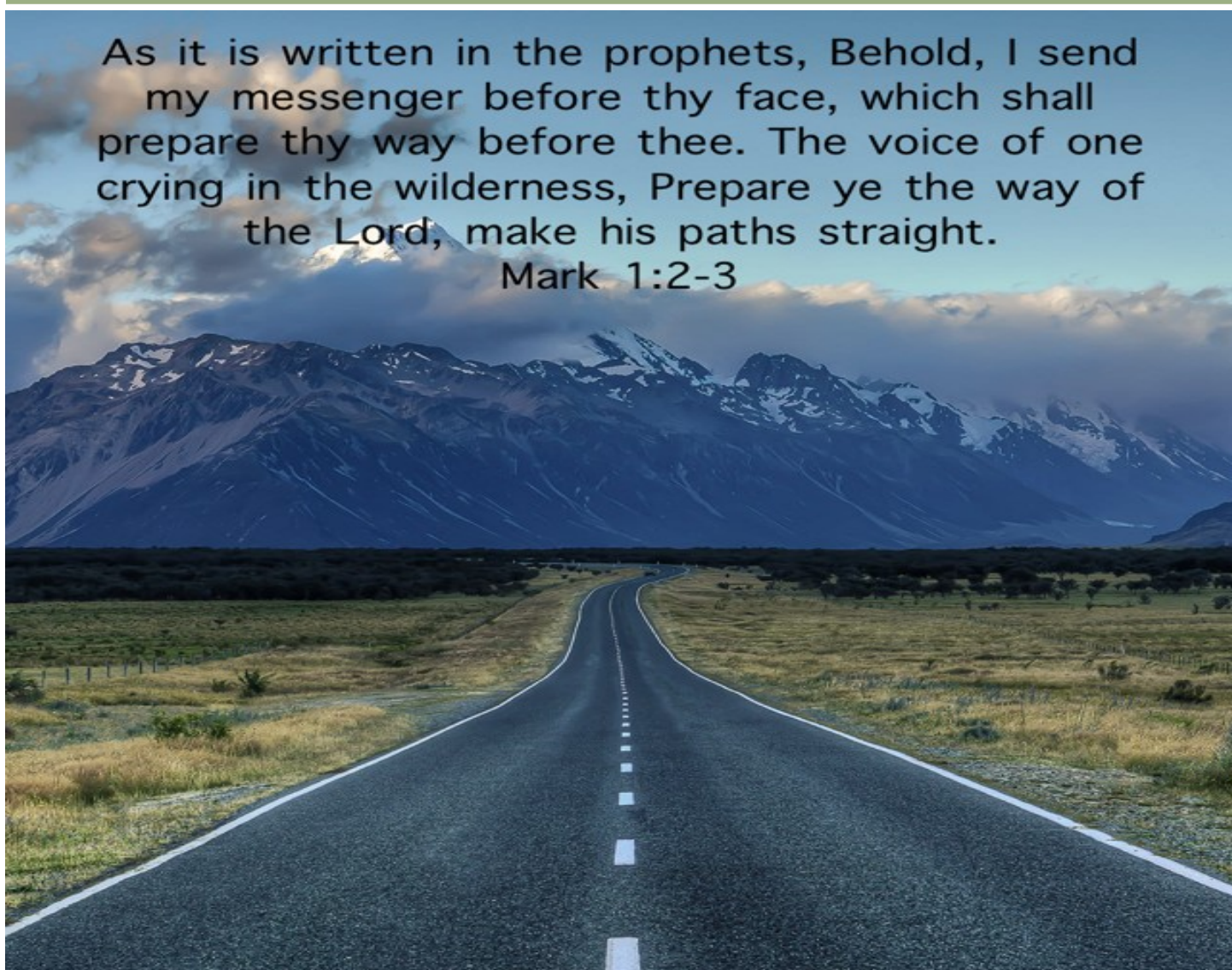
Gracious God, I pray that you will turn our hearts toward you as Christmas approaches. Let us not get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season this year and miss the chance to celebrate the gifts of hope, peace, joy, love that you sent to us on that first Christmas. That first Christmas, you gave us the gift of hope wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

Thank you, Holy One, for your immeasurable gift.

In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Mark 1:2-3



Christmas Blessings

Submitted by Rev. Catherine Oxenford-Grant

Do you have any idea why we put lights on Christmas trees and on our houses? They are lovely and because it is now close to winter (as displayed by our recent snowfall and the clocks falling back) the lights really make quite a difference. And they wouldn't be nearly as obvious in July!

The winter celebration with lights may have begun as a "lighten up the winter" ceremony for us, but for over 2,000 years, it's been a celebration of Christ's birth...and of course, we light the Christ Candle at the beginning of our worship services. It has been a celebration of Christ's birth, with evergreen trees to demonstrate hope and the lights to help us delight in the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World.

At this time of year, we need light. But there is also much happening in our world that needs light and love to bring healing and hope. Sometimes we notice this even in our families, our churches, our community, and our schools.

Do you have any light within you to share? Well, of course you do. Each of us in our own way adds light to a room and to this world. The Christmas tree wouldn't look nearly as beautiful with only one light and it certainly wouldn't glow. In just the same way, our community of faith wouldn't have as much hope or joy or brightness with just one person. Each of us, each of you is a light or has a light inside you. You may not think you have a lot of light, but we all know how even one small light can make a big difference.

Your generosity and initiatives like the Trinity Sharing Cupboard (spearheaded by Sheila Anthony) and our Road Ahead discussions - these are small lights that will one day and perhaps even now make a big difference to and within the community of Verona and our Trinity congregation.

Each of you, each of us have a light within...a spark of divinity, a glimmer of hope. Never underestimate the significance of the spark and the hope that is inside of you. This is the life God gave you. It matters what you do. You can make a much greater difference than you can possibly imagine. And when we all shine together? Well, it is just like the Christmas tree – beautiful!

May the star of wonder and the star of light with royal beauty bright, guide us all to the perfect light.

Blessings to you and yours this Advent and Christmas Season.