

Worship

Grow

Serve

Monthly Tidings

Trinity United Methodist Church

TALLAHASSEE FLORIDA

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Because of God's love for us through Jesus Christ, we exist to worship, grow, and serve.

What is Advent?

*Rev. Dr. Wayne Wiatt
Lead Pastor*

From an early age, I remember an Advent wreath in our home. Ramona and I continue this tradition today, often assembling it out of candleholders and decorations we have collected through the years.

The season of Advent, which comes from the Latin word *adventus* meaning "coming" or "visit" begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent is the beginning of the church year for Christians. This year Advent begins with the fourth Sunday before Christmas on November 29, and ends at sundown on Christmas Eve, Thursday, Dec. 24.

One of my grandchildren's favorite activities during Advent is the daily posting of an Advent symbol pinned each day on a felt calendar, used when my own children were in pre-school! They just received a new calendar a week ago from a cousin that now includes a gift of chocolate each day of Advent when you open a special door numbered with the day of the week.

During Advent, we prepare for and anticipate the coming of Christ. We remember the longing of Jews for a Messiah and our own longing for and

need of forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning. Even as we look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem, we also look forward to anticipating the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by his first coming.

When we visited Bethlehem last year on our trip to the Holy Land, we waited in line for several hours to see this holy site because of its world-wide significance. I remember joining in with groups waiting in line at the Church of the Nativity and singing some of my favorite carols including

"Silent Night" and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

Although we are accustomed to celebrating Christmas on a single day, in both our Christian tradition and on the church calendar, the Christmas season actually begins at sundown on Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve) and lasts through the Epiphany of the Lord on Jan. 6. This is sometimes referred to as "the 12 days of Christmas."

The color for Advent has traditionally been purple, although Trinity has now adopted blue with a special gift of new liturgical paraments a number of years ago.



I am excited that this year we will unveil a new Chrismon Tree, with handmade ornaments by a dedicated team of folks sewing these beautiful symbols of our faith.

From Advent to Christmas to Epiphany, we make our journey each year to find the star that leads us to the manger in Bethlehem.

Once Again, this Christmas we will gather at the manger;

Once Again, this Christmas we will worship the newborn king;

Once Again, this Christmas we will sing the songs of our faith; and,

Once Again, this Christmas we will answer the call to follow the star!

...And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people."

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:8-12 NIV

O Come Let Us Adore Him;
O Come Let Us Adore Him;
O Come Let Us Adore Him;
Christ The Lord!

Christmas Eve Worship at Trinity Thursday, December 24

4:00pm – Young Children and Family Service (Sanctuary)

Singing of Traditional Carols
Children's Special Music
Children's Sermon
Candlelight Singing of Silent Night
Live Nativity after the service 'til 9:00pm

7:30pm – Service of Lessons and Carols (Sanctuary)

Scripture Readings & Traditional Carols
Chancel Choir
Instrumentalists
Handbells
Organ

9:00pm – Christmas Under the Stars (Front Portico and Duval Street)

Family Worship Outdoors
Worship Band
Traditional Carols
Cider and Fire Barrels
Silent Night by Candlelight

11:00pm – Christmas Eve Communion Service (Sanctuary)

Special Instrumental and Vocal Music
Traditional Carols
Family ensembles
Holy Communion
O Holy Night



* All Christmas Eve services are subject to change based on the ongoing assessment of our COVID-19 Planning Team



I Remember My First Christmas

Neal Avirett
Associate Pastor

When I was seventeen, I had worked and saved what I thought was enough money to move out of my family's home and begin living on my own. I was ready to go. But then came the news that my mother and step-father were suddenly getting a divorce. This was the third time, and I felt the present struggle like a curtain being drawn over whatever I thought my future plans might be. Instead of leaving, I vowed to my mother that I would stay another two years, so she wouldn't have to go it alone.

The money I saved I blew on the best Christmas gifts for family and friends I had ever given. They were used to getting five dollar gift coins from Turtles Music Store. That year I bought a buddy a basketball goal, another a really nice shirt, and others cologne. For my family it was clothes, kitchen items, and manly gadgets. The looks I got from these gifts were priceless. It was a mix between gratitude and "Did your doctor tell you something we need to know?" kinda looks. I remember feeling like I was glad that I did something extravagant at least once in life for the people I loved.

Three years later, three days after that Christmas with my grades from FSU in my hand, I vowed to follow Jesus in my one bedroom apartment. I bought a Bible the next day, read, and prayed. You've already heard the story of making my first Christian friend in Strozier Library and the invitation that followed to the Wesley Foundation. But it was the following year that Christ came alive in me. My father went from telling me, "I think you've lost your mind," to being



baptized eight months later with my grandparents in tow. The toughest was staying home for that first Spring Break, and telling my friends that things were different for me now. Though I lived alone, God was with me like a roommate that neither cleaned after Himself, but didn't leave a mess either. That year the holidays took on new meaning. There was a freshness in them that I can only determine was because I knew Jesus and felt known by Him.

At Thanksgiving, I felt I was sharing this moment with God; He was the new friend at the table, and I remember thanking Him for little things that probably went unnoticed and unspoken all my life. At Christmas, I found myself really slowing down, remembering what was for me extravagant gift giving three short years earlier, and wondering what can I give that speaks to what I now had in Christ: what can't be bought, stolen, or easily forgotten.

I wanted to give what God had given me, Christ. And though this may not be the verse John Wesley would've chosen, it was my humble offering as a eleven month old child of God, "Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." - John 17:3.

I wrote this verse in little plain brown note cards with plain brown envelopes as not to distract from the revelation I was trying to impart to all the people in my life. I even got a hand-written letter back from my landlord, who I had never met, thanking me for sharing my new-found faith. Looking back, he probably thought I was a weirdo, but he mailed me grace anyway.

It was my first Christmas because Christ had come, even to me. The world hadn't changed, but the world in me had. God's grace was new. Like Mary, Christ born in me. Unlike most children, I remember my first Christmas.

A Note from Lisa ...

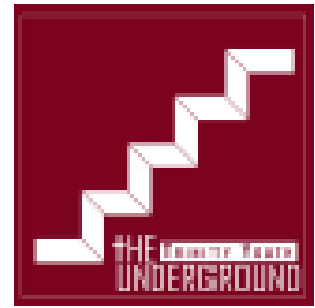
Lisa Prasse
Youth Director

I can hardly believe it is December! 2020 has been quite a year. While Covid-19 changed many of our beloved traditions, we have fared well and remained in touch with one another, continuing to share God's love with one another and the world, just as He teaches us. Throughout November, we shared another face-to-face gathering. We hike Bill's Trail at Lafayette Heritage Park and sold lots of trees and wreaths! Those will be distributed in the gravel lot from 5-8:00pm on Wednesday, December 2nd. Sadly there will be no chili nor Festival of Lights for the youth group and our church family to share this year. Instead, we will stay in touch via ZOOM throughout the holidays and look so forward to seeing our friends at Christmas Eve services where many will be involved and safety

precautions will be adhered to, just as they are at current Sunday services. We look so forward to celebrating together then!

As we slowly continue to carefully open the Underground, you'll receive more information regarding more regular youth meetings again in our own space. We will do this with the utmost attention to health and safety while providing a safe space for our youth to be together as we realize their emotional and mental health is as important as their physical health...we need to be together.

So for the new year, we will look very forward to all that! Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. You can reach me at lprasse@tumct.org. Meantime, Merry Christmas!



Mark your calendars:

December 2

Christmas Tree/Wreath

Distribution- 5:00-8:00pm

December 24

Youth help lead worship at the

4:00pm Service



*The Youth shared an afternoon hangout on Bill's Trail at Tom Brown!
It was amazing weather & fellowship.*



What's Happening in Children's Ministry

Allison Corrigan
Director of Children's Ministries



It is such a joy that the Advent season is upon us, and we can be filled with hope and anticipation for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ! I hope your family finds peace and joy as you prepare your homes and hearts for Christmas. Age-appropriate Advent activities were delivered to children active in our Children's Ministry programs. If you did not receive a bag and would like activities for your child, please email me at acorrigan@tumct.org.

NETkids will continue to meet both virtually and in-person through December 16th. You can catch us online on Mondays from 4:30-5:30PM, and in-person on

Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30. New children are always welcome to join. Please email me if you have any questions about the program or would like to sign your child(ren) up.



Preschool Updates

Stacey Duggar
Preschool Director

This has been an unusual year for everyone, and it's no different here at the preschool. Our enrollment is down, and due to COVID-19 protocols, our staffing is up. That combination is tough as it leaves us with a (financial) deficit at the end of each month.

We are hoping to add some families/kids so that we can return to pre-virus enrollment! You can help by sharing this flyer with your family and friends. The flyer is on the preschool and church Facebook pages if you would like to share it; or if you email me, I will get you a copy that way. sduggar@tumct.org.

We appreciate your support.

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www.tumct.org

Trinity United Methodist Church

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PRESCHOOL

Gold Seal School

Congratulations to Trinity Preschool for their reaccreditation and for being recognized as a Gold Seal School for three more years! This designation is given to early education centers who show the highest level of care in the state of Florida.



**TRINITY UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
PRESCHOOL**



MONTHLY
Findings
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Rev. Dr. Wayne D. Wiatt, Senior Pastor
Neal Avirett, Associate Pastor
Dr. Nick Quinton, Director of Adult Discipleship and Education
Spencer Schrowang, Director of Communications

Outdoor Christmas Concert with Cloverton – Tuesday Night, December 8 at 6:30pm

Killearn United Methodist Church is hosting a FREE outdoor Christmas concert with Cloverton. Bring your own lawn chair, blanket, and some hot chocolate for a great night of Christmas cheer. We will be practicing social distancing and wearing masks when you are not in your seat.

Seating is available starting at 6:00pm, and the concert will begin at 6:30pm. We will gather in the grass parking lot to enjoy a great night of music and fellowship outside together.

If you have any questions, call or text Mike Toluba at 850-544-7087 or email mtoluba@kumconline.org

