



Trinity Dove

December 21, 2008 + Advent 4 + It's a Boy!
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

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✦ Sabbaths & Celebrations

Wednesday, December 24

- ✦ Family Holy Communion with the Affirmation Singers at 7 pm
- ✦ Lights, Readings & Carols with the Trinity Choir at 11 pm.

Sunday, December 28 ~ Christmas 1

- ✦ Anchor Worship with lots of carols.
- ✦ Community Fellowship at 10:30 am.
- ✦ Sanctuary Worship at 5 pm

Sunday, January 4 ~ Christmas 2

- ✦ Anchor Worship at 9:30 am (Parish update, 9:20 am)
- ✦ Community Fellowship at 10:30 am
We honour Rose & Mike Mueller. There will be cake!
- ✦ No Faith Adventures this morning.
- ✦ Sanctuary Worship at 5 pm

Sunday, January 11 ~ Baptism of Our Lord

- ✦ Anchor Worship at 9:30 am (Parish update, 9:20 am)
- ✦ Community Fellowship at 10:30 am
- ✦ Nurturing Faith: Faith Adventures at 10:45 am
- ✦ Nurturing Faith: Adults...
Interesting Lives with Edward Faruzel
- ✦ Sanctuary Worship at 5 pm

Sunday, January 18 ~ Epiphany 2

- ✦ Anchor Worship at 9:30 am (Parish update, 9:20 am)
- ✦ Community Fellowship at 10:30 am
- ✦ Nurturing Faith: Faith Adventures at 10:45 am
- ✦ Adults... Interesting Lives with Lori Arnott
- ✦ Sanctuary Worship at 5 pm

Sunday, January 25 ~ Epiphany 3

- ✦ Anchor Worship at 9:30 am (Parish update, 9:20 am)
- ✦ Community Fellowship at 10:30 am
- ✦ Nurturing Faith: Faith Adventures at 10:45 am
- ✦ Nurturing Faith: Adults... TBA
- ✦ Sanctuary Worship at 5 pm

✦ *andré lavergne*

✦ Christmas Greetings

Members of Trinity's parsonage families —André & Barbara, Ruth / Ian (Viet Nam), Blake (Guelph), John / Mckenzie (Toronto), Dayna / Eric (New Hamburg / Guelph), Anne, Trevor & Nathaniel, and Syd & Joanne,— wish our parish family every blessing this Christmas and offer our hope for a holy and happy New Year. We are grateful for the many expressions of warmth and affection. May God bless you, each and every one.

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✚ Pr. André ~ It's a Boy!

Grace and peace, friends.

As I write, I've just gotten off the phone with Rob and made a few final corrections to the GUIDE TO WORSHIP for Chris Lindner's funeral tomorrow. In the back of my mind is the knowledge that within a few hours I will hear from Trevor & Anne about the birth of their child. Before sending this issue of TRINITY DOVE off to the printers, the few blanks that have been left in this edition —the title for this column, for instance— will have been filled in.

It is a bitter-sweet time in the parish. A child has died at the end of a harsh journey we can barely fathom. There is simply no grasping it or understanding it. At the same time, the promise of new life has been heralded for months yet there is not much grasping or understanding that mystery either. As the late Janine Maine (Interfaith's Director) used to observe, "It just is what it is."

Sometimes I think that Christians have spent too much time trying to understand and explain things when we might better have devoted ourselves to the simple companionship of the journey. So much of life is simply inexplicable, whether in celebration or sadness. And the truth is, you can love people, and do whatever love requires, without understanding the why's or wherefore's of any particular person's reality. You can love people without requiring any explanation. ...

Just a minute ago, I took a call from a mom inquiring as to the locations for visitation and funeral. She was teary: "It's just so hard. I have children of the same age."

Indeed, it is very hard. And as she hints, it is our common human reality that binds us together —no explanations required. No explanations possible. It's our common human journey which binds us together.

And it's that same human journey which we celebrate in the mystery of the incarnation at Christmas. God doesn't offer any explanations. I'm not sure we'd buy them anyway. God simply says "I'm with you." God simply says "I'll be there." Whether at birth or at death, "I'll be there."

There is a big journey to be shared in the days to come. It embraces sadnesses and celebrations both. And it is enough that we accompany each other, and love each other, and welcome such as wish to join us for the journey.

Blessed Christmas!

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ Christmas Is Coming!

Christmas Hampers

During Advent, we invited people to sign-up for a gift for our Christmas Hampers, to provide warm winter woollies, or to make a cash donation toward food items. On December 9, our Priscillas and friends assembled the hampers. As always, they included vouchers for turkeys and other perishables. Cash donations are therefore also very important and welcome. Envelopes should be marked "hampers." The need is very great this Christmas! Please give generously.

Nurturing Faith Christmas Program

The Faith Adventures team invites our community to a marvellous Christmas program, Sunday, December 21, at 11 am. Emma & Caroline Wiechers are lighting the way... Rumour is: The part of Jesus will be played by Nate Anderson!

Christmas Blood Donor Clinic

On Monday, December 22, from 1:30 to 7:30 pm, Trinity will be hosting our Fifth Annual Christmas Clinic at Waterloo-Oxford. Please consider volunteering a few hours and/or giving the gift of life. We will need help with set-up and take-down. Speak to Ken Seltzer. To schedule a donation, please call 1-888-2-DONATE. As always, though, walk-ins are welcome!

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ There Will Be Cake!

January 4, 2009, shall be observed as Christmas 2 and celebrated as Rose & Mike Mueller Sunday.

April 5, 2009, shall be observed as Palm Sunday and celebrated as Ken Seltzer Sunday.

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ Adult Learning

Interesting Lives

Beginning in January we renew our terrific Interesting Lives series with presentations from Edward Faruzel (January 11) and Lori Arnott (January 18). Terrific stuff!

✚ *andré lavergne*



✚ Sacraments & Seasons

Births

Our community welcomes the births of Isabelle Maria (Sept. 16), a daughter for Stephanie Bingeman & Marcus Sandford; of Trent Kenneth (Nov. 2), a son for Catherine (Weigel) & Travis Deckert; and of Nathaniel William (Dec. 10), a son for Pastor Anne (Hallman) and Trevor Anderson. Blessings!

Baptisms

On November 23, we celebrated the baptisms of Lily Moon Diebel, daughter of Tristen (McCorkindale) & Scott Diebel & of Amaya Raine Snyder, daughter of Shannon (Roth) & Jared Snyder. Wonderful!

Death

Our community mourns the death of Chris Lindner on Sunday, December 7. Chris was only 9 years old. It seems that he lived more deeply and more fully, in his brief span of years, than many of us do in a lifetime. We grieve with the Lindner family.

January Birthdays

2 - Stephanie Price, Pam Diebel; **3** - Cindy Harrison, Gerry Legare, Suzanne Preikschas; **4** - Mike Speers, Debbie Nickolas, Nicholas Pearson, Kieran Johnston, Joseph Heise, Brooke Medley; **5** - Edward Faruzel, Logan Arnott; **6** - Steven Wettlaufer, Raelyn Cook Meghan Jantzi; **7** - Doris Langford, Bob Ruthig, Curtis Steinmann; **8** - Anne Hammer, Nathan Otterbein; **9** - Daryl Junker; **10** - Emma Giiick, Bob Cook, Fred Staus, Bradley Barnes, Samantha Junker, Ada Bender, Joseph Durrer; **11** - Krista Durrer; **12** - Kendra Mayer, Sarah Clarke, Danika Parkin; **13** - Peyton Ayre, Owen Burchatzki; **14** - Amy Steinman; **16** - Michael Hayes, Andy Knackstedt, Erika Mueller, Michaëla St-Pierre; **17** - Cliff Wootton, Dagmar Otto, Ashley Sheard; **18** - Raimond Danner, Peter Kellendonk, Lisa Livingston, Jacob Durrer; **20** - Trisha McCormack; **21** - Liz Livingston, Brady Schmidt; **22** - Daniel Mueller; **23** - Bob Anger, Cindy Hammer, Hilmar Hofmeyer, Dave Mueller; **24** - Hollice Stock, Mike Gascon, Matthew Parsons; **25** - Peter Scheid, Tracy Klaassen, Alayna Bailey; **26** - Todd Diebel, Joseph De Sapio; **26** - Laura Shantz, Steven Jokic; **27** - James Anger, James Oldenburger; **28** - Clarence Schamber, Ken Hoffman, Larry Keller, Stephen Daniells, Mike Otterbein; **29** - Norma Steinman, Jane Eichler, Leanne Snider; **30** - Ralph Becker, Noni Stewart, Shawn Burchatzki, Sophia Haffner; **31** - Jean Shantz, Serge Blaquiere, Jason Brodrecht, Mackenna Schaaf. Happy birthday, friends!



January Anniversaries

3 - Bruce & Debbie Jantzi; **7** - Charlotte & Mike Speers; **9** - Kevin & Valerie Dupree; **13** - Dianne & Hugh Stere; **14** - Karen & Mark Jutzi, Sheila & Stan Leis; **16** - Serge Blaquiere & Traci Jutzi; **18** - Daryl & Ron Junker; **19** - Jochen & Mildred Knackstedt; **22** - Crista & Steve Coughlin; **23** - Ed & Marjorie Stix; **25** - Chris & Kendra Mayer; **26** - David & Julie Schroeder. Congratulations!

“Wow” Anniversaries in 2009!

65 Years

Ray & Mildred Cook (May 5)

60 Years

Ralph & Myrtle Pauli (September 24)

55 Years

Ken & Kaye Pauli (June 12)

Stan & Barb Otterbein (June 23)

Carl & Lorraine Schroeder (July 16)

Buck & Joyce Roth (December 28)

50 Years

John & Elaine Bowman (March 21)

Chuck & Charlotte Schiedel (May 9)

Ron & Jean Schaaf (July 25)

✚ *jill merner*

✚ Aspects of Love

We had planned to host Aspects of Love on Sunday, December 28, during the Christmas lull. Barbara and I have wanted to celebrate the gifts of love and our marriage at a festive Anchor Community service featuring soprano Sharla Nafziger and accompanist Charlene Nafziger. Not to be! For now.

Sharla has been involved in an intense diplomatic reality to allow her to travel to Canada and return to the US. She is Canadian while her husband is American. The problem is that she is having a terrible time getting the required documents to allow her to travel back and forth. It has been a nightmare for her, costing her a gig as recently as this weekend in Mexico, and an opportunity to be with her family here at Christmas. It's just been awful. So we're going to postpone because we really want her to be a part of our celebration. Music means a lot to us as does Sharla. Stay tuned. We're a little down but not out!

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ Dear Kim, This is what I believe...

Explaining Christian Faith Today

Each month, by kind permission, we publish an extract from Bill Loader's book, Dear Kim, This is what I believe...

Chapter 5: What About Right & Wrong?

Re-inventing the wheel?

It is naive to impose on people the expectation that they reinvent the wheel, let alone keep it well balanced, without drawing on the wisdom of experience and reflection. This is especially so for those facing the ups and downs of puberty. Here guidance is appropriate, as are guidelines, boundaries, even legal statutes (for instance, on marriageable age). The key thing, however, is having a relationship with someone more experienced in life, whom we can trust and with whom we can share the ups and downs and weigh the decisions. Parents can sometimes fulfil that role, but sometimes it has to be someone else. Adolescence can be turbulent as well as exciting, but it is a wonderful gift to be experienced and an important stretch of the journey through which to make our way. Unfortunately, in the area of sexuality, some people remain adolescents for decades, perhaps under the misconception that they will never be able to marry growing up with sexual fulfilment. The contrary is true: adult sexual fulfilment can only really blossom if we allow ourselves to continue to grow and let our sexuality take its full place within our living and our loving.

Sexual Exploitation

The last two decades have also brought a greater awareness of sexual exploitation, especially of women by men, both outside of and within marriage, not to speak of child abuse and incest. Much of this is the product of people not making the journey to where sexuality assumes its natural role. Sexuality cut off re-emerges as a force of its own and with a mind of its own. Some of it reflects traditional patterns of behaviour. We are still emerging from age old prejudices which have subordinated and often subjugated women to the whims of men. There have been codes of silence which have hidden abusive behaviours. Male aggression in sexuality, whether overt or covert, is still rarely questioned in our society and lies at the base of many forms of sexual abuse. Exploitation belongs also to a much wider system which is reflected in many women holding down two jobs, one in the community and one at home, and in much more subtle attitudes, enshrined in our very language, which discounts women and women's contributions.

Christianity's adaptation, already by the later New Testament writings, of the prevailing patterns of household management in declaring the man the head of the house has contributed strongly to such attitudes. Such attitudes are deeply ingrained. They colour our language about God, our styles of decision making, our structures for decision making in the Church and the community. It has been liberating in recent years to recover Christianity's earlier radical traditions which set women and men equally side by side. The benefits of such developments are as much for men as they are for women, both generally and at the level of their sexuality.



Complex ethical issues

... Today we are facing many very difficult new decisions on right and wrong. How free, for instance, should scientists be to experiment with human embryos, to clone human species, to culture human tissue for repair? When should medical treatment cease in the case of terminally ill patients? Should such patients have the right to terminate their own lives? What about animal experimentation? How far should the community sacrifice its forests and natural flora and fauna for the sake of exploiting new resources for the community's needs? Can we afford to allow our cities to grow as they have? What limits should we impose on industries to curtail polluting gases in the environment? What role should our community have in arms manufacture? Is nuclear energy a responsible energy alternative? Should uranium be exported when there is only a limited assurance that it will not one day be used in nuclear weapons? Should pure heroin be made available to users to counteract the dangers which arise from use of impure heroin and the criminality and exploitation rampant in the illicit drug trade? How far should the community restrict sale and advertising of cigarettes? Should marijuana be legalized?

I cannot discuss these questions here, but they belong to the wide range of issues of right and wrong with which we must grapple. In approaching them our guidelines are few. They all flow from concern for people and include some of the following questions: Are the solutions in the long term interest of the world and its people? Is an adequate data base being considered? Have the possible effects on people and their environment been considered? Are the voices of those directly affected being heard clearly? Are the questions being asked in a way which ignores or excludes other relevant issues? The Church, at its best, addresses some of these issues and sometimes risks, for the sake of love, its own solutions, which may or may not prove appropriate. Safe silence in so many of these would be a betrayal of care. Often people, including many Church people, resent the Church's having its say. In

reality in most cases it is an elected body or a representative who issues a statement. It ought to be seen as only that and not more than that, as though the person or elected body were claiming to be able to express the view of every member, let alone, with absolute certainty the view of God! Yet the often fierce resistance which we encounter seems to hark back to just such an understanding of the Church (that it speaks for God and so claims infallibility). In most of these issues the Church as such has no particular expertise and joins the conversation primarily because of its concern for people and the world. It deserves to be heard, I believe, because of the long tradition of wisdom and love it represents.

Many of the issues noted above belong to the so-called 'grey areas' facing our community, where dogmatic assertions simply do not help. These issues need full discussion with adequate information and the willingness to take risks. Strong controversy aids the process if it means all angles and details are carefully explored. At its best our parliamentary system of Government and Opposition parties serves the process of exploration well. At worst we find decisions being made not in the long term interest but to gain votes to retain or regain power. The preferable process of decision making is one where every person is heard and respected and where people share a concern to work together for the good of all.



Fear of facing complex issues

Some people find such processes difficult and want someone to tell them simply what is right and what is wrong. In the wider community they want a heavy handed government or a 'right thinking' dictatorship. In a Christian context they claim the Bible has all the answers or that the person who prays will know God's will. I believe this is simply not true. Occasionally we may be fairly confident of God's will for us, although even then it is wise to check our perceptions with others; but often we do not know, and to pretend to know on the basis of misguided piety is delusory and can be very dangerous. Religions which have set answers of rights and wrongs have plenty of customers. But they are often, to my mind, an escape from reality. At the very personal level of individual living we often face 'grey areas' on decisions such as which job we should apply for, where we should live and with whom. We need to trust ourselves to make decisions and be caring and tolerant of our mistakes. We don't need to walk around full of fears and surrounded by guilt.

Disappearing 'don'ts'

I can only welcome the disappearance of so many of the

'don't's that characterized Christianity and smile at them now: don't gamble, don't drink, don't dance, don't go to the movies, don't play sport on Sundays. It now seems all so trivial, especially since I could take all that so seriously and yet have no idea what the bigger issues of life, like justice and peace and poverty, were about. It was just like the people of whom Jesus said that they strained out a small fly only to swallow a camel. I don't mean to imply that none of those 'don't' areas is relevant. There are quite a few where dangers to health and wholeness still lurk, not least in smoking, but hardly in dancing, movies and sport on Sundays!

There are bigger issues of right and wrong which have less to do with keeping petty rules and regulations and more to do with compassion for fellow human beings and care for the environment. It is the compassion I see lived out in the life of Jesus that is my starting point for thinking about right and wrong. Inspired by Jesus' approach, I like to think of God sometimes as being like a wise old woman or man, full of understanding and also of no-nonsense caring. Such a one looks upon our struggles in decision making with eager compassion, understands our mistakes,

stays with us in new ventures, has all the patience in the world as we learn to love and the sadness and anger when we don't and shut ourselves off; but is always there, ready to listen, to comfort and to challenge.

There are, however, many situations in life, where we do not have time to think over our decisions and weigh our alternatives. And many of the things we do are determined not by what we think but by what we feel and what we are. So the kind of person we are is an important component in our thinking about right and wrong. In the same way in our society many wrong actions must be seen as part of a longer process which reflects something being wrong in society itself. When we see kids sniffing petrol and adults abusing themselves with alcohol, we need also to ask what has been going wrong in society that people make self destructive choices like these. When we do, we will often find a whole history of violence and abuse which has robbed communities and people of their self respect. Ask any Aboriginal Australian!

Ultimately discussion of right and wrong, whether in relation to individuals or to communities, needs to consider much more than what people do. It needs to consider how things are. This is why being Christian is more than being concerned with doing right or wrong. It is about a way of being, both as individuals and as a community, as I hope to show in the final chapter.

✚ Tintinnabulations

December 20 ~ Sebert Open House

Let's honour Florence's 85th, Saturday, 2-4 pm, in Trinity Hall. All welcome! Food Bank contributions welcomed!

December 22 ~ Blood Donor Clinic

Trinity hosts its Christmas clinic on Monday, 2 to 7:30 pm at W-O. Ken Seltzer, 662-2432, is looking for volunteers...

January 5 ~ Annual Reports Due

Annual reports are due by 9 am.

January 5 ~ ELW Gathering

Trinity's ELW gathers, 12:30 pm, to receive annual reports and more. All women are welcome. Contact Mildred Knackstedt, 662-3739, for information.

January 6 ~ Prayer Circle Update

Shirley Unrau & pastor meet, 9:30 am.

January 7 ~ Congregated Dining

Community Care Concepts offers a lunch program for seniors, adults with a disability. Details in the narthex.

January 13 ~ Nurturing Faith - Adult Learning Team

We'll gather at 8:30 am in the Martin Luther Room.

January 14 ~ Nurturing Faith - Children & Youth

We'll gather at 7 pm in the Martin Luther Room.

January 15 ~ DOVE Prep Team

The DOVE Preparation Team gathers at 9 am.

January 20 ~ Gentle Friends

The Gentle Friends Readers gather, 7:30 pm, at members' homes. Information from Kathryn Ritz, 519.662-2960. This month's pick: *The Bookseller of Kabul* by Asne Seierstadt.

February 8 ~ Annual Meeting

The date is Sunday, February 8, 10:45 am. Note the deadline for annual reports is January 5.

✚ *andré lavergne & jill merner*

✚ Second Century Update

Following a report by the Second Century Task Group to Council in October, the Task Group undertook to get some feedback from beyond Council and the Task Group proper. On Wednesday, November 19, Rick Ritz, chair of the Second Century Task Group, reported the following to a joint meeting of the Task Group and Council.



1. Serious interest in project as understood in Reference Plan. Comprehensive. Touches all bases.
2. General interest in seeing Reference Plan documents published.
3. People are impressed at how carefully & methodically Council & the Task Group have proceeded.
4. Big surprise that cost is under \$300,000 for everything in the Reference Plan. People expected that it would be much higher.
5. General view that we need to get a sense of where the economy is headed before proceeding.
6. Serious interest in anniversary celebrations of some sort.

At the November joint meeting, Council approved the following six Task Group recommendations:

1. That we post the Reference Plan Concept Drawings in the Katie Luther Room. (Posted November 20.)
2. That we publish copies of the Reference Plan Notes and the Schedule of Costs. (Published November 20.)
3. That the Task Group bring the project back to Council in May, 2009.
4. That we postpone a referral to the congregation until the Task Group returns to Council.
5. That the Task Group consult with Ernie Ritz about an anniversary volume and time-line. (Will happen soon.)
6. That Council consider where to place the accent in anniversary celebrations.

Our 2CP Reference Plan addresses: ① the need for a new sanitary sewage line; ② the issue of the settling floor in Trinity Hall; ③ the need for a more hospitable and serviceable kitchen; ④ the need for additional program space; ⑤ the need to mark the 100th anniversary of Trinity's sanctuary (2010); ⑥ the concern for the reduction of Trinity's environmental footprint.

Questions? Comments? Speak to Rick Ritz (chair; stewardship) or any other Task Group member including Flex Bender, Michel Gascon (advisor; drawings), Darrin Gueguen (technical), Bill Lindner (property), Pat Schmetzer (recorder; hospitality) or André Lavergne.

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ Finances to November 30, 2008

	General Fund	Capital Fund	Transfers
Income	\$ 216,449	\$ 14,203	\$ 16,549
Outgo	242,602	3,185	14,065
Balance	(\$ 26,153)	\$ 11,018	\$ 2,483

Bob Ruthig reports that the big news this month is a \$6,000 insurance payment in November which pushed our deficit through the roof. Our deficit has grown with only a month to go in 2008.

By now you will have received an end-of-November offering statement and PAR application form. Two things:

1. Please help us to get caught up for 2008! For my part, as I only ask of you what I ask of myself or my family, we have made our own contribution toward helping to reduce our deficit.

2. Please review your PAR contributions for 2009 or consider joining PAR if you are not already aboard. Our family has been aboard since Day One simply because PAR is good stewardship. FYI, Trinity currently receives about \$11,000 monthly from some 81 PAR subscribers/families. Please join us!

The Capital Fund should end the year in relatively good shape even though a major furnace repair will eat into our accumulated surplus somewhat.

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ TRINITY DOVE Online

A number of Trinity families have elected to view TRINITY DOVE online rather than to receive a hard-copy. Simply supply us with an e-mail address and you'll receive notification of the latest issue as it goes to press.

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ Thank you, Shepherds, Dove Team!

Trinity's shepherds do a remarkable job of getting our newsletter, offering envelope sets and other items into the hands of our parishioners. To you, we say, "thank you." And to the "Dove Team"—the people who, once a month, assemble TRINITY DOVE—we also express a word of thanks. More great stuff!

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ The TYGers' Den

Christmas Caroling!

Back by popular demand... Our third annual Christmas caroling event will be taking place Friday, December 19, at 7:30 pm. Come for singing in the Trinity neighbourhood, and for hot chocolate and a movie in the Bruce Hammer Theatre afterward. The Scheid family is in charge.

Facebook Group

All TYGers: Don't forget our Facebook Group. To participate, e-mail anderson@telc.ca with your Facebook info. I'll get you signed-on.

✚ *anne anderson*

✚ Secret Sisters' Pot-Luck

Our ELW hosts one of Trinity's most wonderful ministries. It's the Secret Sister program in which women are paired with one another as "secret sisters."

During the year, each secret sister sends birthday and anniversary greetings, seasonal cards and small gifts to a "secret sister." The latter does not know the identity of the former. Participants gather for a February pot-luck supper at which identities are revealed.

Are you a current participant? Terrific! Not aboard? Consider joining on February 2, 6:30 pm, at this year's pot-luck supper! Call Millie Rhem, 662-2727, for details.

✚ *andré lavergne*

✚ Christmas Offerings

Worshippers are invited to designate their Christmas offerings however they wish (General, Capital, Pastors' Discretionary, etc.). *Undesignated* offerings are placed in the *General Fund*.

To be eligible for a 2008 tax credit, contributions should be forwarded to the Church by Wednesday, December 31. We will keep our books open for a few days to take account of any offerings caught in the mail.

Thank you for playing your part in keeping Trinity financially healthy!

✚ *andré lavergne*

