

## **Advent:** Stop to marvel in the wonder of God's love

The season of Advent is a time of anticipation and

preparation. But as we move into this holiday season, we can get overwhelmed with plans for the holiday: organizing, shopping, wrapping, cooking, travelling, decorating, all packed into short weeks, with shorter days. And the world around us is focused on material things. More to buy, sales; we are warned about the number of shopping days left, not to miss this opportunity. We wait for our opportunity to gather with our families. The weather may not cooperate. The end result can be anxiety. We just want it to be perfect. And so we often focus on the

world around us and not on the true meaning of Christmas.



*Deacon Dan  
Maxwell*

Christmas can be a time of wonder, of peace, despite the crazy world around us. As we deal with the stress and anxiety of the season, I encourage us all to take time, every day, to stop and focus on the true meaning of the season: God's Love for us manifested in the birth of God's son, the messiah, Jesus. A few minutes talking with God, prayer, gives us the opportunity to refocus, to put the concerns of the day aside, to thank God for the many blessings of our lives and the gift of his Son. A time to relax, to put our worries aside and marvel in the wonder of God's Love.

God didn't come into the

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*Fellowship Hall is dressed for Christmas!*

**Christmas Eve service starts with music at 4:30!**

***A half-hour of specially-prepared Christmas performances by the choir, duettists, and soloists starts at 4:30 Christmas Eve, with worship at 5 p.m.***

## Stop to marvel...

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world with great glory and power, with armies and arms, dressed in luxurious robes with trumpets sounding the arrival. God came into our world as a baby, clothed in rags, born to a poor family, in an oppressed and anxious soci-

ety, vulnerable and exposed. God changes the world quietly, with love and compassion.

This can be a season of anxiety but it should also be a time of peace and hope, new beginnings and love.

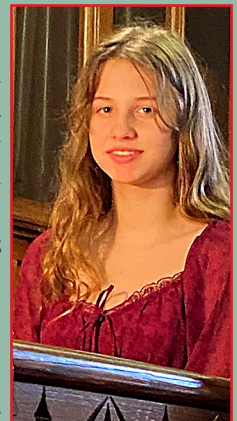
May God's Love embrace and comfort you as we await and celebrate the arrival of the Christ child. – DEACON DAN



## Retelling the Christmas story

For many of us, being in a Christmas pageant is an unforgettable experience. And watching one, especially as a parent, grandparent, or special friend, is even better. Tina Wilson directed Trinity's Worship Center children in this Dec. 18 presentation of the Christmas story, complete with Mary and Joseph, a shepherd, angels, kings, and even a donkey. In a pageant narrated by Kaylee Krupnek are participants (from left) kings Jackson French, Dominic Losano, and Cody Krupnek; Joseph, played by Jayce Losano; Maddie Wilson as Mary; Annie French as the Angel Gabriel; Angel Cailyn Peters;

Max Wilson as the donkey; and Harper Woolman, shepherd. Bill Powell and Ted Rockwell had cameo roles as prophets, Kat Tomaszewski provided music, and Worship Center helpers Cheryl Lemke and Bronwyn Woolman assisted the director.



*Narrator Kaylee Krupnek*



## Hark the herald! Angels sing!

As you settle yourself in your pew on a cold Christmas Eve at Trinity Church, listen for the angels; you just might hear them.

At 4:30 Saturday, Trinity's Christmas Eve celebration begins with the special music of Mary-Ann Hubbard, Cheryl Bates, and Kat Tomaszewski in a flute/piano trio of Christmas anthems. Next, a combined choir of First Congregational Church and our own Trinitarians will lift their voices in praise for God's great gift. Following that, in recognition of those who suffer during the holidays with homelessness, loneli-



ness, sickness, and the pain of grief, Steve Westrope and the choir will sing a somber prayer for help and healing.

The Rev. Bruce Michaud will lead the worship and give the homily. During the service Mike Furtaw and daughter Vivian will sing "Mary Did You Know?", Mrs. Hubbard and Mrs. Bates will perform a flute duet, the choir will sing, Leo Wojda will sing Polish carols during communion, and Ted Rockwell will offer the postlude. You might hear more Polish carols in Fellowship Hall following the service. Christmas Eve's gifts of music are coordinated by Kat Tomaszewski.

## Summary of parish self-study out in January

The Vestry has written a summary of the parish self-study completed in November and will present that to the congregation in January.

The self-study, a diocesan prerequisite to searching for a new priest, describes what kind of parish Trinity is and what it's looking for in a rector. It was developed through a committee of parishioners headed by Rich Bates and disseminated to all members in the form of two questionnaires.

The study began in September and was completed in two months. The diocese will use the results in its nationwide call for priest applicants.



## TECW plays Santa for Shelter

The families temporarily housed at Shelter, the center for those experiencing domestic violence, may feel "uprooted" at Christmas. To comfort and cheer them, Trinity Episcopal Church Women and many parishioners each year buy and wrap gifts for Shelter families and send them off with "Santa." Gerry Cawthra, who heads up the annual drive, surveys gifts about to be wrapped.



### *A page for her scrapbook: the Little Girls' Tea*

When it comes to girls' "special occasions," it's hard to top one that calls for getting dressed up, eating fancy pastries, and laughing with friends. Through the efforts of Bronwyn Woolman, Kathryn Kunze, Fran Hamp, Sue Krafft, Debbie Brown and others, 24 girls under age 11 came to "Advent Tea" at Trinity Dec. 3, having a splendid time engaging in

Advent-related crafts, dining on fine china, and sipping tea (or milk or water). Teenagers Vivian Furtaw, Kaylee Krupnek, Faith Cousins, Hannah Stauffer, Lucy Duthler, Emma Kinsel, Isabelle Kinsel, Kahlan Mousseau and Alexis Peterson kindly volun-

## Trinity parishioners spread good cheer – and frosting!

Armed with plastic food-server gloves, toothpicks, butter knives and great gobs of the most delicious frosting, a platoon of about 12 Trinity parishioners and extra helpers on Saturday converted a mess hall full of ordinary sugar cookies into the stuff of Willy Wonka’s dreams.

And they did most of it sitting down.

Music Director Kat Tomaszewski set the target – brightly-colored Christmas cookies for those who come to Trinity’s free Sunday supper – and developed the strategy. She called it “Cookies and Carols,” baked the cookies ahead of time, let volunteers do the frosting, and let them eat as many as they wanted as they turned out plate after colorful plate of expertly- and inexpertly-decorated sweets.

In the end, the group went well beyond “mission accomplished” and agreed it was a tasteful operation in every sense of the word. The Sunday supper folks loved it. Thanks, Kat! We can’t wait to do it again!



*Kat Tomaszewski (right) marshals her cookie forces.*



The Rev. Bruce  
Michaud



The Rev. LaRae  
Rutenbar



The Rev. Mark  
Rutenbar

## Interim pastors meet need

As we celebrate Christmas, it seems only right to thank the ecclesiastics who celebrate the Eucharist at Trinity in absence of a full-time pastor. We consider each a special blessing.

This week, retired former Trinity rector the Rev. Bruce Michaud will conduct the Christmas eve service that begins with music at 4:30 and worship at 5. Rev. Michaud serves weekly at Wednesday’s noon worship.

Retired Episcopal priests LaRae and Mark Rutenbar, Presque Isle residents, conduct Sunday worship at 8 and 11 a.m., each serving every-other-month, two Sundays per month. On Sundays absent the Rutenbars, morning prayer services are led by Deacon Dan Maxwell and one of three lay worship leaders – Bill Powell, Ted Rockwell, or Lisa Rhea.



## Flowers to honor a loved one?

*Wish to honor loved ones or mark a special occasion with flowers on the altar? Please call Sonya Titus (989) 354-6031 to make arrangements!*



## Trinity Times taking a 'time out'

We hope you enjoy reading the somewhat occasional, mostly bi-monthly Trinity Times. This edition is an effort to showcase what we're doing for Christmas while getting it in your hands before we're actually done doing it. Also, don't look for the next issue until April; the editor is taking a winter break. In the meantime, have a happy, healthy winter!

## Who helped? The elves!

Decking the halls, when the halls are as many and the ceilings as high as they are at Trinity Church, requires a lot of work. Fortunately, the parish has a few elves willing to take on the long list of projects to get them done. A whole crew of elves will be on the job Wednesday afternoon to decorate the church-proper, and another group, including Michelle and Jim Munro, Eric Cornish, Fran Hamp, Bob and Marge Lakin, Carole Cadarette, Bronwyn Woolman, Gerry Cawthra, Cynthia Taylor and Kevin, Sue Krafft, and Lew and Katherine Kunze put up the big tree in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to all, named or not, for working so hard!



Trinity Episcopal Church  
124 E. Washington Ave.  
Alpena, MI 49707