



## **Greetings Everyone!**

### **WILDERNESS**

In our Monday afternoon bible class, we have been working our way through the first five books known as the Torah, the Law of Moses, and also called by Pentateuch (5 books of instruction and law). As I reflect on our time together, it seems to me that God's chosen people are destined for wilderness times. For every one in the Bible who has been chosen to do something for God—they have endured a wilderness of training, preparation, isolation, humiliation, set backs, rejection and, at times, desperation. The Catholic monk, Thomas Merton says the following about the Israelites desert experience. *“The desert was created simply to be itself, not to be transformed by men into something else. The desert is therefore the logical dwelling place for the man who seeks to be nothing but himself— that is to say, a creature solitary and poor and dependent upon no one but God, with no great project standing*

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*Between himself and his Creator.”*<sup>1</sup>

Wilderness times are essential to our spiritual growth because the distractions have been eliminated. It can be an awakening to what is truly important. It can be a time when awareness of our internal strength, courage and confidence is discovered and heightened. In the wilderness is where we become in tuned with the voice of God and where there is opportunity to listen to our lives. Wilderness presents an opportunity for us to commune with God, rest in God's presence, and also to reevaluate and assess our yesterdays as well as seek wisdom about our tomorrows. The wilderness is valuable.

As we begin to think about the holiday season approaching, for some of us it may feel like a wilderness. We look at our bank accounts and they have dried up. We think to ourselves, "What kind of Christmas can we have without money for gifts?" How can we expect the children and the grandchildren to understand?" The city of Flint has seen some hard times and many of its residents have relocated leaving certain parts of the city deserted. But, from what we have discerned about the wilderness in our studies and in our life experiences is; the wilderness years are those times when God can turn our bad choices into a good life. Out of the wilderness comes new

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opportunity for positive changes. Our dried up bank accounts may be an opportunity for us to reevaluate how we celebrate Christmas. Witnessing the hard times in Flint may prove to strengthen the community and cause a renewal.

We must remember when Moses entered the desert, he was a fugitive—a criminal on the run. But, God used those wilderness years to transform his criminal past into a promising future. The wilderness can transform your life, and, it can also bring new and improved life to the city of Flint. Think about it.

Blessings,  
Pastor Lawson

<sup>1</sup> Merton, Thomas *“Thoughts in Solitude”*  
New York, 1958, pg. 5

# New Form of Government

There have been changes made to the Book of Order, specifically section 1, The Form of Government. We have now a **New Form of Government (nFOG)** which was proposed at the 219th General Assembly (2010) and approved by a majority of the presbyteries and now included in the 2011/2012 Book of Order. The nFOG section of the Book of Order has been condensed and now gives presbyteries and sessions (formerly governing bodies now called Councils) a bit more latitude in making decisions regarding the governance of individual congregations. In lieu of these changes, we have been asked to update our by-laws as well as develop a manual of operations. For the next few months, the Session will be working together with members of the church to develop the manual of operations based more closely and more reflective of this particular congregation. For example, the manual will include a description of each team at Trinity United, their meeting times and the goals and objectives of the team. It will include information about membership and nomination process, ordination, etc. Planning and thinking through how and when we do things will help us to provide ministry in an orderly fashion.

There will be more information provided in the future.

## **Special Care Members & Friends**

Ron Auger  
Peggy Brack  
Celestine Bronson  
Betty Elford  
Violet Flaming  
June Foltz  
Dr. Alfred Gwillim  
Connie Hutchins  
Helen Johnson  
Ann Lomax  
Roy Olson  
Marjorie Rutherford  
Phyllis Scales  
Larry Shoup  
Joan Shirey  
Larry Tilley  
and  
Charlie White

***Please Keep our Special  
Care People in Your Prayers.***



## **FROM THE DEACONS**

The Deacons have their schedule for the Soup Kitchen and the Food Bank for this month.

### **SOUP KITCHEN**

Friday, NOVEMBER 11, 2011            2-5pm  
Friday, DECEMBER 2, 2011            2-5pm



### **COMMUNION SERVERS FOR NOVEMBER**

Roberta Hardy            Kathy Henderson  
Delphine Holland        Phyllis Scales  
Peggy Brack              Shirley Hall  
Dr. Ernestine Jackson



### **SUPPORT OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM**

Iran, Afghanistan, Germany, Korea, or right here in the United States, young men and women have put their lives on hold, so that we can be protected from the evils in the world. We need to support the troops wherever they are serving. We can make their lives a little more like home, by sending them some small items from home. Check out the list that is available and please make a donation. Thank you!!

# Nursery

The Nursery still needs 2-4 adults to care for children every 6th week. The adults need to be caring and trust worthy, as our children are precious to all of us & to God. If interested, see Delphine Holland, Sharon Auger or Rev. Desiree Lawson.

## NOVEMBER

- 6—Mary Krist
- 13—Beverly Bronson
- 20—OPEN
- 27—Audrey Resler and Gayle Kettler

## DECEMBER

- 4—Karen Fischer
- 11—Sharon Burton
- 18—Roberta Hardy
- 25—Mary Krist



## AVERAGE ATTENDANCE MAY-SEPTEMBER

MAY—89                  JUNE—90                  JULY—90  
AUGUST—105 (with 140 at the church picnic)  
SEPTEMBER—95

# **The Four Sundays of Advent Leading Up to Christmas Begin on November 27, 2011**

The Advent Wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Lighting its candles is a common practice on the four Sundays leading to Christmas.

Different color combinations for the candles are used depending upon the church or denominations. Some churches use four blue candles around the wreath with one white candle in the center, while some use all white candles. Many denominations light purple candles on the first two Sundays, pink on the third, purple again on the fourth Sunday and a large white candle on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

The wreath, the candles and the colors all have symbolic significance. The circular green wreath symbolizes the everlasting love of God, having no beginning or end. Green represents eternal life.

The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. One tradition says that each candle also represents one thousand years. They total 4,000 years—the time from Adam and Eve until the birth of Christ.

Purple, in ancient times, was expensive and was considered the color of royalty and kings. On Christmas, Christ is proclaimed King of Kings.

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Purple also symbolizes humility and penitence.

Blue is another color often used as a symbol of royalty. Some churches use blue candles to symbolize the night sky and the anticipation of the announcement of Christ's birth. Blue also symbolizes the beginning of a new creation as in the waters of Genesis 1.

The first purple candle signifies HOPE.

The second purple candle stands for PEACE.

The pink candle for the third Sunday symbolizes JOY and signifies the halfway point of Advent.

The final purple candle is for LOVE.

The large white candle in the center is the Christ candle. Its light symbolizes Christ The Savior—"The light of the World.

The beauty and brightness from the glow of all five candles is a reminder that Christ's life was the light for all earth's people—"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5, N).



## **Advent Wreath**

# Birthdays & Anniversaries



Loren Taylor.....	02
Eva Keely.....	03
Phyllis Scales.....	04
Rev. Desiree Lawson.....	04
Russell Auger.....	10
Olivia Thomason.....	12
Diamond Story.....	18
Janis Beach.....	19
Sharon Bonney.....	22
Tracy La Fuente.....	25
Jeffrey Needham.....	25
Harold Ryan.....	27
Delphine Holland.....	30
Connie Hutchins.....	30
Patricia Miller.....	30
Grace Saunders.....	30
Lynwood and Marie Barry.....	11

**HARVEST DINNER  
WILL BE HELD  
NOVEMBER 20TH  
FOLLOWING WORSHIP**



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**Children's Clothing Drive**

The Deacons want to thank all of the people that have donated to their clothing drive this past year. As winter approaches, the Deacons' are stepping up their Children's Clothing Drive, with emphases on the special needs of our children. Jackets, sweatpants, sweatshirts, underwear, socks, hats, mittens, gloves and scarves, in sizes 5-6 through 12-14 for both boys and girls. Please bring your donations to the church and place them in or near the School House box located in the multi-purpose room. Monetary donations can also be made to this cause by marking your check or envelope, Deacons Children's Clothing Drive.

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**NEWLETTER DEADLINE FOR  
THE DECEMBER  
NEWSLETTER WILL  
BE WEDNESDAY  
NOVEMBER 16, 2011**



## FRONT PORCH

On the first day, God created the dog and said “Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years. The dog said, “That’s a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I’ll give you back the other ten?” And God saw it was good.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said, “Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I’ll give you a twenty-year life span.” The monkey said, “Monkey tricks for twenty years? That’s a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the dog did?” And God, again saw it was good.

On the third day, God created the cow and said, “You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer’s family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years.” the cow said, “That’s kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years. How about twenty and give you back the other forty? And God agreed it was good.

On the fourth day, God created humans and said, “Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I’ll give you twenty years.” But the human said, “Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me my twenty, the forty the cow

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gave back, the ten the monkey gave back, and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?” “Okay”, said God, “You asked for it.”

So that is why for our first twenty years, we eat, sleep play and enjoy ourselves. For the next forty years, we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next ten years, we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren. And for the last ten years, we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

Life has now been explained to you. There is no need to thank me for this valuable information. I'm doing it as a public service. If you are looking for me, I will be on the front porch.

Unknown



**I'll be on the  
Porch**

# TREES

Trees have been a part of man's existence since those early days in the Garden of Eden. Eve was attracted to the fact that its fruit was "forbidden". Whatever the reason, trees have played a very important part in our lives. Trees were used to build the ark and a twig was brought back to the ark to symbolize that dry land had been found. Trees have been used to build churches, houses, boats, ships and bridges. A tree was used to make the cross that Christ was crucified on.

Trees also have been used to symbolize important times in our personal lives. Fifteen, maybe twenty years ago, one such tree was planted to memorialize the hard work and effort that one man and a congregation had put into the building of their church. The tree that they planted, was not yet a tree, it was but a mere sapling. Like the church, the sapling grew with time. The tree like the church had some good times and some bad times. The tree was growing, the congregation was growing, and then the process started to slow down. The tree started to look old and kind of worn down. It was only five to six feet tall and leaned to one side.

A new day was coming; the tree was plucked from its first home and moved to what would become its new home. Out of the city and into the country. This tree was planted at the site

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of a new promise and a new church. The church and the tree would begin a new life.

The tree that made this journey was originally planted to honor the hard work and effort of the founding pastor, the Reverend Quick, of Christ the Liberator.

After three years the tree has straightened out and has grown to a height of about fifteen feet. A new church building has been developed on this site, and has grown stronger as it makes its transition to “A Growing Multicultural Church”. We have been led and assisted in this endeavor by many people. Two special people, Rev. James Offrink and Rev. Annie R. Duncan, have been recognized and honored with the planting of two flowering crab trees.

We are starting a new journey, with a new pastor and new vibrant new direction. Our purpose and mission is as follows. We the members of Trinity United Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are called by God to proclaim God’s word to all people, through lively worship, hearty fellowship, and a desire to nurture a spiritual relationship as servants of God”.

It’s our prayer that the trees and the congregation of Trinity United Presbyterian Church, grow and bloom together.

# **LECTIONARY READINGS**

**November 6, 2011**

*Joshua 24:1-3b, 14-25*

**Communion Service**

**“Choose This Day”**

**Rev. Desiree Lawson**

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**November 13, 2011**

*1 Thessalonians 5:1-11*

**“Stay Sober”**

**Rev. Desiree Lawson**

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**November 20, 2011**

*Matthew 25:31-46*

**“Anticipation”**

**Rev. Desiree Lawson**

**Christ the King Sunday**

**Harvest Dinner**

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**November 27, 2011**

*Mark 13:24-37*

**“Unwrap Your Faith**

**Rev. Desiree Lawson**