**Newsletter November, 2020**

**Message from the Minister**

Dear Friends

In this eighth month of our pandemic journey I feel weary. Weary of the angst of catching a terrible virus. Weary of not gathering as the Church. I know that we come online each Sunday but it is not the same. Let us not pretend otherwise. I miss you all. Offering the Peace or Christ without handshakes, hugs and looking at each other eye to eye is not the same. I would love to throw all caution to the wind and invite you all to join me in a celebratory worship but we are not there yet. The journey must continue. Early on I used the metaphor of climbing a mountain and coming to a rise thinking we have reached the summit, only to see the steep trail before us.

Certainly, we can celebrate our successes. We have had online and live worship from the beginning. We have found a way to share our prayers. Study groups have met, meetings and planning continued. We have deepened our connections and relationship with our friends in the other United Church congregations in our cluster. We have received the support from the federal government and many of you have made extra effort to continue your offerings through all these months. Thank You. Thanks be to God.

My heart cries out: “How Long, O God. How long must we hide in our homes?” We know how blessed we are. We are much better off than many regions around the world. There are no shortages in our stores. Yet my heart yearns to see the end of this situation. Pray for strength and courage to stay the course. The reality of recent numbers reminds us that we are in this present situation until the spring at least. Unless the present trends change dramatically and until an affective vaccine can be distributed, we will have to continue worship and gather online. My heart wishes it was otherwise.

I remind you of what you already know, it is not the building that makes the church, but you, me, all of us as followers of Christ that make the church. The church is not located in downtown Abbotsford but locate where ever you are. The church is more than simply a building and programs. We are the church, and we are called to heal the world. We worship to connect with God and be in community, but our worship is also intended to call us to follow the ways of Jesus in the world. Each of us in our own way according to our ability, capacity and as opportunity arises in our lives are called to do the work Christ in our world. We are the church, wherever we find ourselves.

Take heart, weary as your heart may be, we the church will thrive and be reborn as we move through and beyond this pandemic journey.

May the light of Christ shine into your life.

May the joy of God’s presence heal your weary heart.

May the great Spirit of the God of all, restore your hope and courage.

Yours in Christ Bill Booth

As we continue and gather in this new way here are ways to connect:

Sunday morning Worship on Zoom and YouTube.

All information and links are available online at trinitymemorialuc.com

Additional weekly reflections on YouTube.

Bible study on Wednesday morning

Book Study on Sunday afternoon starting at noon.

Men’s breakfast every second Friday mornings at 8am

UCW units meeting by zoom. UCW organized zoom small groups.

Connecting via our phone out team and phoning each other.

**Bill’s YouTube Weekly Reflections**

Every week since we began this Pandemic journey Rev. Bill has posted on his YouTube channel a short reflection to encourage you. You can find these videos by following the same link as for our Live Sunday worship. Or open YouTube on your device and search on Bill’s email billboothwhb@gmail.com

**Financial note for 3rd quarter newsletter**

This has been a year like none other. It has had a financial impact on our church with no rental income for several months & missing 2-3 fund raisers. Like our church, you & other members of the congregation may have felt financial pressures. Nevertheless, through September offerings have only dipped 1.7% compared to the same period of 2019 & M & S contributions have tapered off by just 5%. In the circumstance, this is a remarkable demonstration of your dedication & generosity. A big thank you!

Our offerings are important for sustaining the many activities of our church including the online worship services, pastoral care, Camp Spirit, various small group ministries (such as the prayer group, youth group, ROMEOs, Bible study, & book study.) If you’re not presently using Pre-authorized Remittance (PAR) please consider this convenient way for making your donations. Forms can be obtained from Rose (but please don’t email completed forms as email isn’t secure.)

A welcome development is that, as of September, monthly rental income seems to be recovering to 2019 levels due to movie company rentals.

Although offerings have borne up well, there have been a couple of months in which revenues decreased so that our church has been eligible for federal government wage subsidy grants amounting to $21,000. In addition, our church has also now received a federal government loan of $40,000,. The main benefit of the loan is that, only $30,000 will need to be repaid. To achieve this, $1,200 is automatically being transferred each month from the Prospera chequing account to an earmarked savings account so that the funds shall be accumulated by September 2022.

The cost for the very necessary replacement of the conference centre’s stairs will run about $20,000 more than expected. The cost of IT support for the zoom worship services & group meetings has been modest (less than $1,200) but was obviously unbudgeted. Insurance, equipment leasing, office supplies, & especially utilities, as well as staff remuneration, have been on track with budgeted levels. Landscaping (including mowing) has been significantly lower due to volunteers’ beneficial involvement.

Thank you for your continuing involvement with our church.

 If you have questions or comments or would like more information,

 please contact Brock at 604-859-8591 or mntnview@shaw.ca.

**Message from the TMUC Board Chair**

As I reflect on the year so far, two words come to mind more than any others THANK YOU! Oh, there are lots of other words that could be used to describe 2020...most of which wouldn’t be appropriate for publishing!

So why THANK YOU? Well, when you think about it, if it wasn’t for the fantastic support of the congregation we would be in a deep and dark hole...so THANK YOU to you the congregation for your ongoing support of Trinity Memorial. Your continued financial support is so very much appreciated!

THANK YOU to our staff for their ongoing dedication to our Church and their never-ending efforts to take care of the needs of the congregation during these trying times.

THANK YOU to Rev Bill for his dedication and determination to provide and improve our online offerings of services and Church programs. He also deserves a huge THANK YOU for bringing the Cluster churches together to share in and assist with the weekly Sunday services.

THANK YOU to our Board and Committee members. The TMUC Board and the Finance and Stewardship Committee continue to meet via Zoom on a monthly basis. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated group of individuals who contribute so much to our Church in so many different ways.

THANK YOU to our federal government for the various financial assistance programs that they have made available to businesses and charitable organizations. TMUC has certainly benefited from a number of these programs.

THANK YOU to the front-line workers and to the health care and emergency workers who are working long and stressful hours to keep us all safe under the cautious and thoughtful direction of our Provincial Health Officer and Minister of Health.

THANK YOU to our friends and family for their ongoing support, love and friendship. Just think about how much worse off we would all be without the support of friends and family during this pandemic. Although, we would all like to spend more time together this isn’t a reality for many of us at the moment so THANK YOU also for the technology that helps to keep us connected with those who are close to us but live so far away.

I would also like to make you aware of the fact that our Annual General Meeting (AGM) has been scheduled for February 14, 2021 following the Sunday Church service. As we do not see ourselves being able to gather in person for quite some time, we are planning on holding an online AGM this year. The Board is working on the nomination process for the 2021 Board and also on the logistics involved with holding an online AGM. Further information will be made available closer to the date but please mark your calendars now with this important date!

Take care, keep well and stay safe!

THANK YOU!

Ken Foreman

**UCW**

Trinity Memorial’s UCW will be offering cookies, jams & jellies, crafts and other items via an online order.  This new venture is in lieu of our traditional Christmas Fayre, which is being cancelled this year due to Covid.  Items ordered can be picked up on **Saturday, Nov 21, 2020 from 10 am to 2 pm** at the church via a drive-thru or outdoor pick up kiosk. Payment via exact change, credit card, debit, or cheque is made upon pick up. Orders close on **Wednesday, November 18 at 5 pm**.

These special items are made with love and quality. Revenues will support the many charitable undertakings of Trinity Memorial UCW for 2021: Women for Change in Zambia, Starfish Backpack Program, Harambee Kenyan Education project, UCC Mission and Service Fund and many more. It will help the organizers if you forward this information and the link below to friends and family. To order click on this link, or insert into your browser. The link will also be on the TMUC website under "Events", and on the Trinity Memorial UCW Facebook page. Copy and paste the following link in your web browser and the form will come up.

<https://forms.gle/zpbAbgkCPARzqmg56>

 If you have questions, contact Rose 604-425-1417

**UCW Facebook Page**

Check out the new UCW Facebook page at TrinityMemorialUCW and tell us if you “like” what you see. Comments are welcome, too!
For December, we would like pictures of TMUC Christmases past or pictures of what is keeping you busy this Christmas. Send them to rsoneff@gmail.com

Are you interested in participating in small Zoom groups during the winter? Perhaps you want to zoom with church friends or would like to belong to a special interest group that discusses travel, cooking, gardening, or whatever is on your mind. Contact Marcia [604-850-5535] for more information or for a Zoom link and then invite people to join you for as many meetings as you would like. We want you to feel connected to your church friends this winter. Also, for anyone interested, the Zoom knitting group has space for 3 more participants. Together, we can get through Covid.



**Starfish Backpack Program**

The Starfish backpack program is once again in full swing. This year we are delivering on a weekly basis 25 backpacks to students at Godson Elementary and 9 backpacks to the Abbotsford Virtual School. The cost of the food for one backpack is $625.00 for the ten-month school year. This year the UCW has sponsored 2 backpacks and you the Congregation have sponsored 1 backpack. Thank you so much for your generosity – these children need our help! If you would like to join the Starfish backpack team, meet us in the Lounge on Thursday mornings at 9:00am. If you wish to support the program financially, indicate the Starfish backpack program on your cheque. Mail or drop off your support at the office. All financial donations are tax receipt able.

**Prayer Group:**

Although the prayer group isn’t meeting in person the prayers continue. June Benedict gathers the Sunday prayers and other prayers sent to her. You can join June and her group in these prayers or send your prayer requests directly to her by calling her at

 604 852 8933 or by email at jfbenedict@shaw.ca

A congregation that prays together becomes strong even in the face of suffering. We are called to bring our worries and hopes to God, especially at a time like this.

**The ROMEO’S Men’s Breakfast Group** are meeting every two weeks on online. All men are welcome. You can find the Zoom meeting information on the webpage under the Online Programming menu. The group meets at 8am every second Friday: November 13,

November 27, December 11th.

Here is the link address: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84971394320?pwd=SVpnbFl0MU1zTUE4S0pEMWtLVUJ4dz09>

**BIBLE STUDY**

Linda Potts has done a great job with Bible Study: sending out the Seasons of the Spirit lectionary material on a regular basis and leading discussion.

Going over the lectionary readings mid-week is good preparation for the next Sunday’s worship, which is based on the same material. It is also a good point of connection in our time of social isolation. everyone is welcome to join: 10:00 AM on Wednesdays: just follow the zoom links in on-line programs. Don Strangway.

**Sunday School**

Wow!  We found a way to do Sunday School.  We send the kids to a separate Breakout room during our Zoom Worship.  Thanks to Lauren Palmer, Adrienne Olszewski, and Don Strangway for making this happen.

**Cluster Environment**

Our Trees have been planted. The trees are planted beside the Willband creek ponds.  See the map.  36 trees planted by the city on our behalf.  Thanks to everyone who contributed to make this happen.



