



# Trinity Tidings



TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December, 2020

## Hope for the Holidays - Coping with Stress or Grief During 'The Happiest Time of the Year'

2020 has been a stressful year. Nothing is normal. Stress, Loss, grief, sadness, loneliness and holidays heighten our emotions. Loss of routine is difficult. As the Christmas season emphasizes happiness and joy, we feel acutely the absence of loved ones far from home, or the strain of 2020's COVID pandemic and politics, financial uncertainty, the death of loved ones, or the unsettledness of our days. Family traditions, Christmas music, lights and decorations, and festivities may bring heaviness of heart rather than giddy joy, but how may you deal healthily with the heaviness of the holidays?

Jim Clifford, a retired pastor and hospice chaplain shared a few suggestions in a 2017 article worth repeating this year. Each of us is unique and what work for works for someone else may not work for you, so be nice to yourself; do that which works for you and disregard the rest. Clifford suggests 4 'P's; Plan, Permission (to be oneself), Pace (yourself), and Practice (spiritual disciplines). I summarize and paraphrase Clifford below.

**PLAN:** Chat with your family and loved ones about the holidays. Share needs and wants, discuss what traditions can stay and what should be done differently. Explain why things need to be different and tell everyone in advance. Don't be afraid to change or stop anything that is not helpful.

**PERMISSION:** Give yourself permission to feel whatever you feel and permission to cry. Emotions are just that - emotions, not rationale thought, and they are not signs of weakness or lack of faith. Displaying emotions is part of being human and tears relieve bodily tension. "It is okay to put yourself first. Set limits on what you can physically and emotionally do."

**PACE:** TEMPO (Time, Events, Money, People, Ordinary). Don't wear yourself down, use TIME wisely, give yourself time. Plan on doing fewer things. Moderate your EVENTS, including eating, drinking, partying. MONEY: Don't overspend. Live within your means. PEOPLE: *With social distancing this year 2020, you won't have the gatherings to which you are accustomed.* Clifford advises, "Feel free to avoid anyone who believes themselves to be helpful but proves to be a hindrance in their actions or words." Appreciate those who are quiet, who offer love and affection, recognize your needs and limits, and don't advise or tell you what to do without being asked. They are generally more helpful in your current state of being. ORDINARY: Maintain order in your life; routines may help bring a new order back into your life. You may have to do some things differently or in a different place or time, but try to keep some new routines to create a new 'normal' for yourself.

**PRACTICE:** What religious practices, practices, or rituals have helped you through tough times in the past? Your beliefs and faith traditions can help you again. Give yourself permission to ask God your "Why" questions, or to question, blame, or even get angry with God. Be honest and frank in your prayers to God. Talk with pastors or trusted friends about your needs, wants, and concerns or even go on a spiritual retreat. Set a place at the dinner table for the person you miss, along with a picture and share fond memories or stories. Make and hang an ornament with the person's name on it on your tree. If decorating a tree proves to be too much, have a simple tree or no tree. Donate time and/or money to a charity or cause in memory of the your loved one: you will honor them and help heal your grieving heart. Attend Trinity's "Blue Christmas" Service on Tuesday December 8, 6 pm: this service is designed to soothe your struggle with darkness, loss, and grief and is attended by people sharing your circumstances.

Advent is the promise of the coming of the Prince of Peace and our 2020 Advent theme, "The Path Home," embraces the truth that as Christ came to dwell among us, we too seek a place to dwell with God. We have different definitions of home and the places where we belong. Some people find home not in physical spaces, but instead in belonging to a community that accepts them for who they are and who God created them to be. Advent and Christmas appropriate such homecomings. Hymns speak of God "pleased to dwell, Jesus our Immanuel." God found a new home among us in the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ - and God will find this home again in the Second Coming of Christ - as we await the return.

The dwelling places where we find God can be our "mangers" - surrounded by parents, children, friends, shepherds, sheep, magi -- and by the movement of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes those dwelling places take us by surprise, sometimes they are the familiar and beloved places where we experience the most comfort and joy; where we most truly belong in all creation. (Tuhina Verma Rasche, *A Preacher's Guide to Lectionary Sermon Series, Volume 2*, p80, paraphrased)

I pray that you all experience God's love and strength sustaining you, enriching you, lifting you, renewing you in this Christmas season and that the Peace of God may reign in your home, your heart, your life, your joy, in the coming year.

Merry Christmas!

*Hugh Hamilton*



### ADVENT EVENTS

**Blue Christmas Service**  
 Tuesday, December 8 at 6:00 p.m.  
 "A service of remembrance and healing."  
 Blue Christmas is an intimate time of worship and prayer. During the service, we light a candle in memory of our loved one(s) who are gone before us.  
 We encourage people who are hurting to join us for a time of reflection and healing. Christmas is a "joyous" time. We offer this moment at the beginning of the season to help those who are blue and lonely. It is a moving and deeply personal time of healing.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES:**  
 Thursday, Dec 24 5pm and 7pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Services in Sanctuary.  
 Our pandemic safety protocols remain in place. Masks are required. Social distancing in the pews. Attendance limited to 100 persons each service; reservations required.  
 For your convenience, you can reserve your spot at this link <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/130114854031>  
 OR reservation cards are available in Sunday morning worship. Pre-sealed communion kits will be distributed as you enter along with candles and wax catchers.

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESENTS

OUTDOOR  
CHRISTMAS  
CONCERT





FEATURING  
PERDIDO BRASS

**DECEMBER 6TH**  
@ 4:00PM

BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIR  
REFRESHMENTS & FAMILY ACTIVITIES PROVIDED

**ADULT ADVENT STUDY:** Sundays in Advent. Zoom Class with Hugh Hamilton and the Serendipity & Gap Classes: *PEACE, JUSTICE, JOY, AND SALVATION: AN ADVENT STUDY*, by Cynthia M. Campbell, PCUSA pastor. Weekly lessons will be emailed. Using passages from Isaiah, we will explore God's gifts to us and our application of gifts toward Justice (12/6), Joy (12/13), and Salvation (12/20). Email the church office ([info@trinitypcola.org](mailto:info@trinitypcola.org)) to receive weekly lesson series.

## Happy December Birthdays!

Freddie Prettyman	1
Susan Clark	2
Mallory Lawrence	2
John Thomas Stamper	2
Aline Nicholson	3
Gail Childs	6
Maren Fox	6
Donna Moates	6
Diane Snyder	7
Craig McFarren	9

Noah Murray	9
Marianne Palmer	10
Debbie Ritchie	10
Beverly Patteson	12
Amy Alumbaugh	14
Joanne Faddis	15
Pat Patterson	16
Melinda Beckett	17
Thomas Prettyman	19
Melanie Haupt	20

Dawn John	20
Mandy Stevens	22
Sue Coleman	23
Cam Massengill	23
Natilee Foster	24
Angie Shehee	24
Phillips Nickinson	30
Sydney Ryon	30

### CONCERNS OF THE TRINITY FAMILY

#### TRINITY MEMBERS

Butch Crooke  
Kenny Heffner  
Richard & Sue Peden  
Jake and Lil Renfroe  
Lamar & Cheryl Wasdin  
Carl Williams

#### TRINITY FRIENDS & FAMILY

Don Allen (neighbor of Dona & Milton Usry)  
Rose Baber (mother of Barb Martensen)  
Jan Baldwin (family of Robert & Gail Childs)  
Morgan Beck (brother of Gregg Beck)  
Connie Brown (friend of Trinity Members)  
Terri Carroll (sister of Dan Prettyman)  
Joe Caruthers (friend of Mary Ruth Dobie)  
Harvey Howell Casey  
(nephew of Mary Catherine Hinton)  
Patricia Clark (cousin of Elizabeth Massengill)  
Nathan Dille (friend of Diane Millas)  
Ken Dunn (request of Fred Gamble)  
Rob Dobie (family of Mary Ruth Dobie)  
Kelly Eberhardt (request of Mary Anne Meier)

Vince Farrugia (friend of Mary Ruth Dobie)  
Kristin Gottschalk (niece of Allen Martensen)  
Tina & Roger Jaskot (friends of Jon & Karen Nagel)  
Joe Kemp (friend of Hugh Hamilton)  
Yangduck Kim (mother of Hyunjoo Kim)  
Jerry LaFlamme (request of Linda Gamble)  
Mason Land (request of Barbara McLean)  
Tom Landsgaard (brother of Greg Landsgaard)  
Allyson Lassiter (niece of Jan Beck)  
Deanna & Jeff Lepa (family of Tom & Sandra Buck)  
Angelica Makepeace (request of Alison John)  
Lora Millard (family of Cam & Elizabeth Massengill)  
Wyatt Mixson & Family (request of Marge Shimmin)  
Barbara & Ben Mozo (request of Sandy Edwards)  
Mary Muller (request of Peggy Watson)  
Shade O'Driscoll Family (friends of Mary Ruth Dobie)  
Jim Potter (request of Jean Norman)  
Allen Smith (son of Gerry Smith,  
brother of Berney Smith)  
Diane Swalin (request of Mary Ruth Dobie)  
Roger Vinson (request of Jean Norman)  
Linda Warrick (request of Marge Shimmin)  
Jo Winford (sister of Jayne Felix)  
Saffron Young (family of Mary Anne Meier)

Prayer Warriors have been praying for our Concerns of the Trinity Family list during this time of isolation. We are grateful to Sally Zorn, Linda Gamble, Jill Clark, Sharon Gensemer, Sandra Holman, Kathy Webb, Marshall Arrich, Jane Patterson, Mary Anne Meier, Pat Harris, Dawn John, and Betty Petree. Thank you all!



Are you utilizing our online database, MyTrinity? This is our digital database where your group leaders and church family can contact you! Please update your profiles!

Group leaders—this is a great time to be connected via an online format! We can help you get your group together in a chat, a group message, or just be connected!

If you need help with your group or your login, please contact Wendy in the church office by email at [wendydavies@trinitypcola.org](mailto:wendydavies@trinitypcola.org).

CONGREGATIONAL CARE Verses of Comfort can be found at [trinitypcola.org](http://trinitypcola.org) > ministries > congregational care > other services - [click link here](#).

**Children's Church has begun again!**

**All are welcome to attend!**



**Operation Christmas Child**

**Thank you for your generous donations to this ministry!  
The shoeboxes are on the way to children around the world!**



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December, 2020 Please visit us at [www.trinitypcola.org](http://www.trinitypcola.org)

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