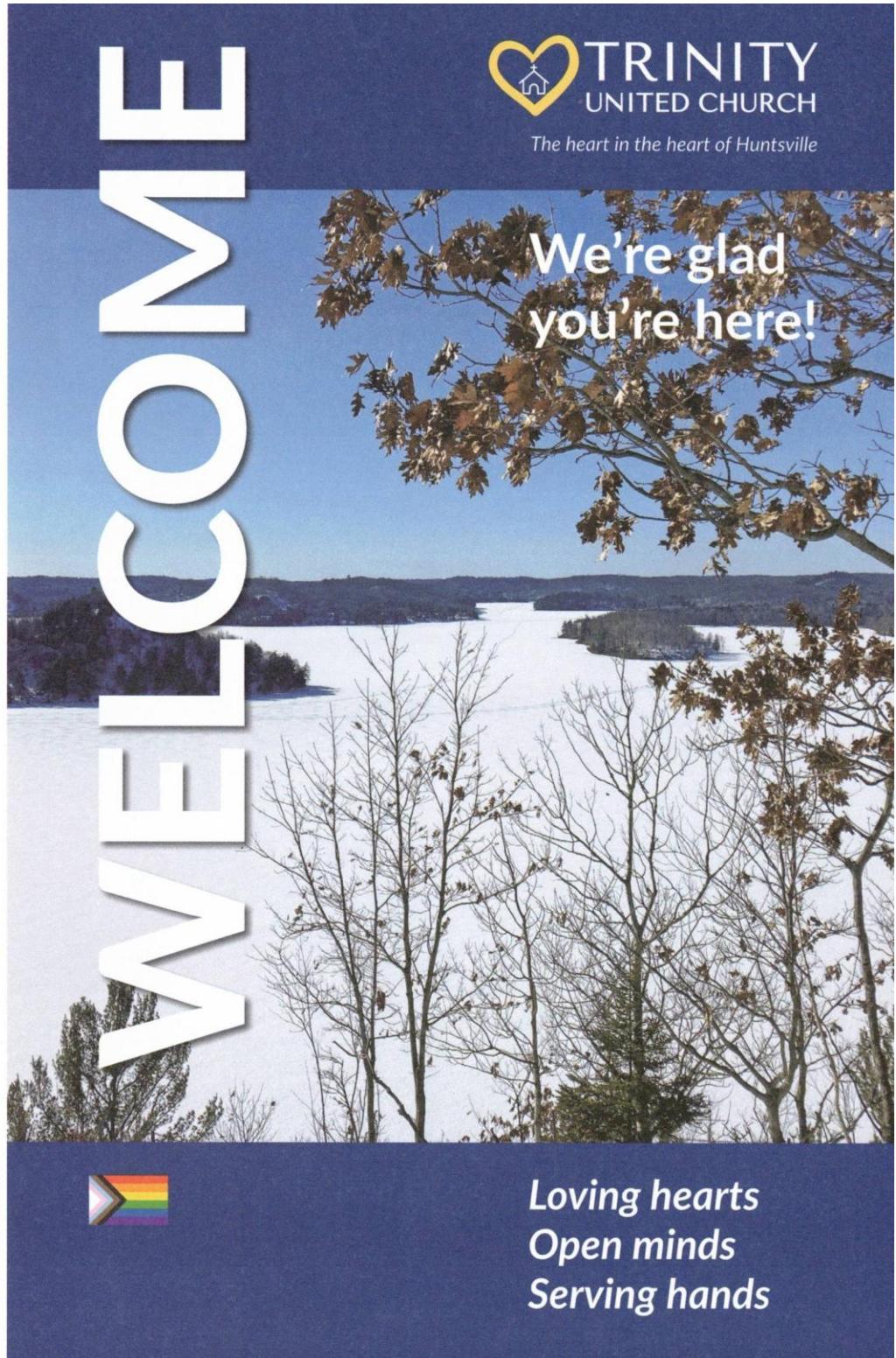




The United Church of Canada acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast, are on the traditional territories of Indigenous people.

Minister: The Rev. Diane Knowles  
Pastoral Care Coordinator: Judy White  
Director of Music: Kyung-A Lee  
Church Administrator: Suzy Simson  
Custodian: Judy Hall

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# Welcome to Trinity

The Heart in the Heart of Huntsville  
The Third Sunday in Advent  
Sunday December 14, 2025 – 10 am  
People of Joy!

“Loving Hearts ... Open Minds ... Serving Hands”

“Joy doesn’t depend on everything being perfect.  
Joy happens when we notice God, love is with us.”

## LET’S GO TO BETHLEHEM AND FIND THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS

**Introit:** “Joyful, Joyful We Adore You”

All: **Joyful, joyful we adore you,  
God of glory, God of love.  
Hearts unfold like flowers before you,  
opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of pain and sadness,  
drive the gloom of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with your light today.**

## Greeting

One: May the joy of this Advent season be with you.

All: **And also, with you.**

Advent is a season of wonder, anticipation and waiting.  
We wait for the Christ child to be born.

We also wait for the Spirit of that first Christmas to be  
born anew in the mangers of our hearts.

Welcome in Friendship! Welcome in Faith!  
Welcome in God’s outpouring of joy!

*We are a lively Spirit-filled community with arms open wide  
to welcome you too! No matter who you are, where you  
come from or where you’re going, we’re glad you’re here  
with us today. May this service bless you and fill your  
hearts with joy.*

## Announcements

**Joys and Concerns, God moments?**

**Moment of Meditation**

**Call to Worship and Prayer of Approach**

One: The deserts shall rejoice and bloom.

All: **We gather to witness God’s joy breaking into our  
world.**

One: Jesus says, “Go and tell what you hear and see.”

All: **We come ready to see signs of joy in small  
moments, in unlikely places, in our own hearts.**

One: Come, here and in your sacred spaces at home, to  
worship the God who brings joy to the wilderness.

**Opening Hymn: “Joy In My Heart”**

All: **I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy  
Down in my heart (where?)  
Down in my heart (where?)  
Down in my heart.  
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy  
Down in my heart (where?)  
Down in my heart to stay.**

I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart.

I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart to stay.

I've got the peace that passes understanding

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart.

I've got the peace that passes understanding

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart to stay.

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart.

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy

Down in my heart (where?)

Down in my heart to stay

Down in my heart to stay

Down in my heart to stay.

## Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy

One: This is our third Sunday in our season of Advent.

Today, we light the third candle of Advent, the candle of joy. Joy often feels elusive in our world, yet Scripture tells us to expect joy even in the most unlikely places.

All: We come looking for the joy that only God can give.

One: Isaiah promises that the desert will bloom and rejoice. Jesus reminds us that God is already at work, opening eyes, healing wounds, lifting up the weary.

All: Joy can surprise us. Joy can find us. Joy can grow even in the dry places of our lives.

## Our Light Beamers light our third candle - the Candle of Joy!

One: As this candle shines, may its light remind us to look for joy, not only where we expect it, but where God plants it. We see glimmers of joy in birthday candles and homemade cards, in the laughter of children and the delight of grandparents, in meals around the table and in the singing of Christmas songs.

All: Come, joy of the world. Make your home among us. Amen.

## Hymn: "Candles of Advent"

All: Light one candle warm and bright.

Light one candle of joy.

Joy for the song the angels sing.

Joy for the special news they bring.

Joy in the child who is born a king.

Light one candle of joy.

## Opening Prayer

All: God of joy, in this Advent season we come with hearts longing for good news. Some of us feel like Isaiah's desert, tired, dry, waiting for life to return.

Yet your promise is that joy can bloom even there.

Open our eyes to the quiet joys around us and when joy feels far away, remind us that you are ever near.

We pray in the name of the One who brings joy to all people. Amen.

## A Time of Remembering

*The angels are hung on the Memory Tree- our tree of Light.*

## Light Beamer Time

*This is the time our Light Beamers hear the stories of Jesus and how his stories teach us to be kind and loving human beings. We strive to teach them to follow in the footsteps of Jesus growing up to have a big heart just like Jesus, a heart that welcomed and accepted everybody. As their hearts grow, they can then go out into the world and shine their light and love for others.*

## Congregational Blessing

Light Beamers: "May the "Joy" of Christ be with you."

All: **And also with you.**

## Choir Anthem: "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day"

## WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

*Our Scripture reader today is Neil Thain.*

## Prayer of Illumination

Reader: Loving Spirit, you speak to us in so many ways, speak to us now and help us to hear your voice in your Holy word. May your Word come alive in the actions of our everyday lives. Amen.

## Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 35: 1-10

*(The desert blooms and rejoices!)*

## New Testament Reading: Matthew 11: 2-11

*(John the Baptist is in prison. Jesus testifies to the validity of John the Baptist's ministry.)*

Reader: Open our hearts to hear these words anew.

All: **Amen.**

**Minister's Message:** "Joy in Unexpected Places"

**Brief Musical Reflection**

**Our Offering Invitation**

One: When we offer our simple gifts to others, joy can bloom in unexpected places.

Our morning tithes and offerings will now be received.

**Advent Offering Hymn:** VU 7

All: **Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,  
telling the world that the Saviour is born.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong  
and none shall be afraid.**

**Offering Prayer**

All: **Joyous God, you show up in surprising places,  
filling deserts with flowers and hearts with joy. May  
these gifts be used to spread a little of that surprise  
joy with others. Bless them, bless us and remind us  
that even small acts of love can bloom in wonderful  
ways. Amen.**

**Hymn:** "Prayer" (tune of "Rock of Ages Cleft for Me")

All: **God of Life and God of Love,  
Holy Spirit, Blessed Dove.  
In each moment of my life,  
in times joyful, times of strife.  
Listen to the words I share,  
as I come to you in prayer.**

## Prayers of the People

### The Lord's Prayer (an alternate version)

All: Eternal Spirit,  
Earth maker, Pain bearer, Life giver,  
source of all that is and all that shall be.

Loving God, in whom is heaven.

The hallowing of your name echo through the  
universe.

The way of justice be followed by peoples of the  
world.

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings.  
Your peace and freedom sustain our hope  
and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power,  
this is love now and forever. Amen.

**Closing Hymn:** "Joy to the World" (VU 59)

### Commissioning

### Benediction

One: May the love that made the stars be our guiding light.  
May the love revealed in that tiny manger be our hope  
and inspiration.  
And may the love of the ever-present Spirit give us hope,  
peace and joy, this day and forever more. Amen.

*Following the end of the Service, let us take three minutes to turn and greet one another with signs of Christ's peace and blessing as we move into a brand-new week.*



Please join us in Trinity Hall following today's service where you are invited for a cup of tea or coffee and fellowship time.

Your hosts today are Sylvia Leeder and Cherryl Demaine.



**Thought for your week ahead!**

*"Although the world is full of suffering,  
it is also full of the overcoming of it."*

Helen Keller

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER STUFF!

**The Outreach Team** thanks you for helping to collect Food for the Corner Lighthouse food bank. **December is Rice and Toilet Paper.**

**Directors Meeting** – Tuesday December 16 at 10:00 am in the Arnold Room.

**Fundraiser for the Corner Lighthouse - Homemade Unbaked Tourtieres (French meat pie).** Sizes: 8" - \$25 and 9" - \$30.



Available while supplies last. Call Lynne Doyle at 705-380-1800 to place your order!

**Christmas Readers and Candle Lighters needed for our Comfort and Hope Service!** Can you help? Please let Diane or Suzy know if you are willing to read and/or light candles at our 7:00 pm Comfort



**Christian Meditation Course — Beginning January 8, 2026**

Feeling a pull toward something deeper?

Wondering if there's more to life than the hurry, noise, and pressure of our everyday world? You're not alone. Many people, especially young adults, are looking not just to *know* about the Divine, but to *experience* it. This January, Trinity United Church is offering a chance to do just that. Spiritual Director and long-time meditation guide **Alexander Jones** will lead a five-week introduction to **Christian Meditation** — a simple, grounding practice that helps us reconnect with God, nurture inner stillness, and awaken the "Divine Spark" within.

**When:** Thursdays, January 8 to February 5, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am – 12:00 p.m.

**Where:** Trinity United Church

**Facilitator:** Alexander Jones, with over 50 years of meditation practice and teaching.

Whether you're brand-new to meditation or simply longing for a more intentional, spacious relationship with God, this course is a wonderful way to begin the new year.

If you'd like to join us, please add your name to the sign-up sheet or contact **Suzy** or **Rev. Diane**.

**Mission & Service** - For everyone who may contribute to Mission & Service directly, please be sure to include: **soft credit Trinity UC, Huntsville- MS 5120220** so that your contribution is added on to Trinity's total M&S contribution!! With thanks!



**"Oh, Come All Ye Faithful  
And Ye Not So Faithful Too!"**



Special Advent and Christmas Services 2025

**Our Service of Comfort and Hope-  
Thursday December 18 at 7 pm**

Christmas is often a season of sadness and loneliness for many people. Come and join us for this service of quiet reflection and memories.

**The Fourth Sunday in Advent or Christmas Sunday -  
December 21, 2025**

This is a wonderful Sunday of celebration. Often, this is THE Christmas celebration for many people who will not be around for Christmas Eve services. Holy Communion will be served this morning.

## **Christmas Eve Services- December 24, 2025**

### **Family Service - 5 pm**

Children get home in plenty of time to hang up their stockings and read The Night Before Christmas.

### **Carol Sing - 6: 30 pm**

### **Carols and Candlelight Service - 7 pm**

This is a quieter, more reflective service with readings and songs as we celebrate the birth of the Christ child in our hearts. Have a Joyous and Blessed Christmas season!

### **Last Sunday in the year- December 28, 2025**

Hymns, Taizé, and Prayer Service led by Kyung-A Lee.  
A Taizé Prayer Service is a simple, meditative form of worship that consists of generous silence and repetitive sung prayers. Taizé prayer is named for the ecumenical Christian community that formed in Taizé, France during World War II.



### **Christmas Blessings from our house to yours!**

May the love that made the stars be your guiding light.

May the love revealed in Jesus  
be your hope and inspiration.

And may the love of the ever-present Spirit  
give you courage, joy and hope  
now and forever more.

Amen. ###

