



MEDITATIONS

If a tree falls in the forest, does anybody hear?
Does anybody hear the forest fall?
~Bruce Cockburn

What happens in Luke is that the announcement is made to the shepherds, and the point here is that both groups that get the message are “outsiders.” It’s made to pagan magicians—that’s what *magi* means—and Jewish shepherds. And the shepherds are not the nice little guys we often think they were. Shepherds in the ancient world were tough guys who protected their sheep from wolves and thieves. They had weapons; they could take care of themselves. Shepherds were considered dangerous outsiders, and they knew whether the system was just or unjust. So then the angel comes to them and announces the birth of the Messiah, the just king expected by Israel, and he gives Jesus some fancy titles—Lord, savior, and bringer of peace. Those titles belong to Caesar Augustus, the bringer of peace being the core title upon which the others depended. If Augustus hadn’t brought peace to the Roman Empire, he probably wouldn’t have survived very long.

~John Dominic Crossan

All things are perceived in the light of charity, and hence under the aspect of beauty; for beauty is simply reality seen with the eyes of love.
~Evelyn Underhill

*Note: During this Advent and Christmas season, Sid will be drawing in part from the words and images of artist, writer, and UMC minister, Jan L. Richardson:
www.janrichardson.com/*

a people with a mission

trinity united methodist church is a dynamic community of people who, through their trust in god’s faithfulness, strive to provide an inclusive, joyful, loving, and caring environment. in this community, people can find spiritual nurture and growth, mutual support of individual needs, and a sense of family. reaching out through vital and creative worship, people-centered programs, and social and environmental stewardship, this congregation serves the local and global communities.

a people committed to inclusiveness

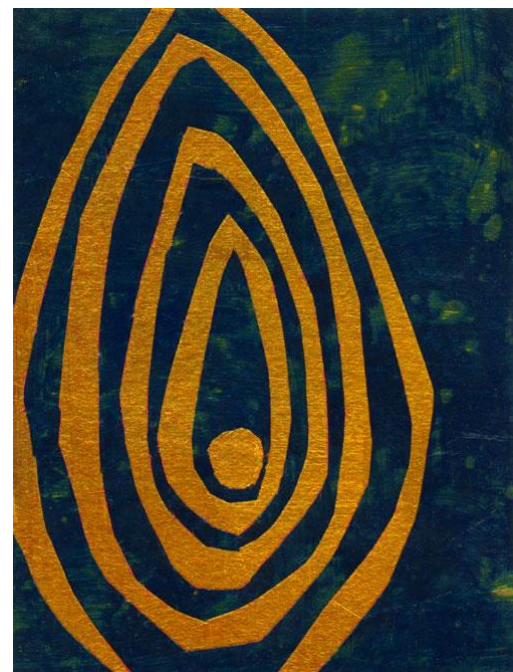
trinity is a congregation that welcomes and affirms all people inclusive of race, nationality, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation, physical ability, mental ability, economic class, or education level. trinity has been a reconciling congregation since 1992.

a creation-centered community

trinity supports **creation spirituality**, a movement that draws on ancient spiritual traditions and contemporary science to awaken authentic mysticism, revitalize christianity and western culture, and promote social and ecological justice.

contact us

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Advent and Christmas Sermon Series: “Threshold Dreams” by Sid Hall

Advent and Christmas are liturgical reminders that we humans, and the earth itself, are always on the threshold between what has been and what needs to be birthed. In this sermon series, we’ll explore the archetypal rhythms of thresholds depicted in Jesus’s birth narrative, thresholds we all face in our lives. Each of us is in perpetual transition, whether through health concerns, the loss of a loved one, marriage or divorce, giving birth, sending a child off to college, or even discovering a new way of being spiritual.

Liturgy is a contrived, human-designed way of imitating the natural rhythms of life, but it is more than that. If we do transitions right, they provide conscious and deliberate markers that help determine those destinations rather than simply waiting for them to happen. What does it mean to intentionally give birth to hope, to consciously give birth to justice, to deliberately give birth to divinity in all aspects of our daily lives? These are just some of the questions we’ll explore over the next few weeks, together.



join us on the city!
sign up at www.tumc.onthecity.org/kiosk



trinity umc

“threshold dreams: if a tree falls (the announcement by the shepherds)”

by sid hall

12/14/14 order of service

befriending creation

call to celebration *

adapted from roger d. straw

one: god calls us now in this advent season to become new,

all: to make room for our new nativity, even where there is no hint of glory.

one: where we are busy—

all: silence.

one: where we are lost—

all: embrace.

one: where we are sad—

all: community.

one: where we are bitter—

all: peace.

one: may this worship be a time to be reminded of all these gifts of god. amen.

song of advent *

“o come, o come emmanuel”

o come, o come emmanuel
and comfort all who in the darkness dwell

and mourn in lonely exile here
until the child of god appears.
rejoice! rejoice! emmanuel
shall come to thee, o israel!

o come, thou wisdom from within
an advent journey to begin
to us the path of beauty show
and cause us in her ways to go.
rejoice! rejoice! emmanuel
shall come to thee, o israel!

carol *

“hark, the herald angels sing”
hymnal #240

lighting the advent candles of hope, love peace *(together)*

*peace came in at christmas
peace all peaceful, peace divine
peace was born at christmas
stars and angels gave the sign*

litany by gretta vosper

one: as this season of advent unfolds around us, the silent prayers of peace lie like stars hidden in a clouded night.

all: may we inspire the world with peace. may we touch it to our lives, that in every place of stress, frustration, or fear, we might feel the presence of peace easing our hearts and transforming our lives. and may we share its healing power with our children, that they might become the inspiration through which peace makes its way to a new, yet-dreamt-of world.

(lighting of candles)

all: may peace light the world this christmas.

befriending letting go

call to prayer

prayers of the people

“prayer is not asking. it is a longing of
note: please turn off or silence your phones.

UPDATE

Advent & Christmas Sermon Series: "Threshold Dreams" by Sid Hall, Nov. 30 – Jan. 4

Advent 1, Nov. 30: The Choice of Fate (The Annunciation); Luke 1:26-38

Advent 2, Dec. 7: No Place Like Home (The Journey to Bethlehem); Luke 2:1-7

Advent 3, Dec. 14: If a Tree Falls (The Announcement by the Shepherds); Luke 2:8-20

Advent 4, Dec. 21: The Charity of Night (The Flight into Egypt); Matthew 2:13-18

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24: Breaking the Vessel (The Birth); Luke 2:1-21

Christmas 1, Dec. 28: Turning to the Great Round (The Naming); Luke 2:22-40

Epiphany, Jan. 4: Wise Women Also Came (The Shining); Matthew 2:1-12



Time to Order Christmas Poinsettias – Every year at this time, we offer the chance to purchase poinsettias in honor or memory of a loved one.

Poinsettias are \$15 each. Please sign up on the clipboard on Sunday or email your order to Laura at info@tumc.org.



Many, Many Thanks: Trinity's Annual Christmas Banquet – The bulletin gets printed on Thursdays, and with the banquet taking place on Friday, how do we know who to thank ahead of time?!

Anyway, to everyone who showed up and contributed in some way: Please know that we're extremely grateful to have so many wonderful people here at Trinity who are willing to pitch in and help. We couldn't have pulled off this event without the many volunteers who worked on setting up and cleaning up, as well as the numerous table hosts who displayed their creative talents with table decorations as well as culinary delights. Even if you weren't able to lend a hand, we're glad you joined us and shared your festive spirit. Thanks again to all of you for making the evening a success!



It Now Looks a Lot Like Christmas ... Thanks to a Few Hard-working Elves! –

After the service last Sunday, several brave souls stuck around and helped decorate the tree and the hallways around the Sanctuary. Please give a big hug and huge thanks to Emily Albrecht, Michelle Renee Edwards, Loel Graber, Russell Still, and Bernie Tiede. Their efforts are immensely appreciated.

Homeless Task Force Needs Volunteers! –

Trinity's Sunday morning HTF is seeking volunteers to prepare and distribute food every other week. They work in 2 alternating Sunday teams. The team most in need of volunteers is scheduled on the following Sundays: 12/21, 1/4, 1/18, etc. Please consider being part of the HTF team. The rewards are amazing!

Contact Rolando Perez at rtperez72@gmail.com for more info.

order of service, cont.

the soul. it is daily admission of one's weakness.... it is better in prayer to have a heart without words, than words without a heart." ~gandhi

after each sharing, the leader will say, "healing and joyful spirit..." and the people respond, "receive our prayer."

befriending creativity

trinity celebration choir

luke 2:8-20;
jan l. richardson, "offerings"

message

"threshold dreams: if a trees falls (the announcement by the shepherds)"
by sid hall

befriending compassion

song for centering

"of our mother's womb created"
tune 11th c. latin; words by sid hall
of our mother's womb created, she that sings the earth to be she is birthing and sustaining, she the life, the wisdom, she of the things that weep, that yearn for, and that justice now shall keep evermore and evermore. amen.

offering of our gifts of money for nurture and justice

please place gifts on the offering table.

wooden bowl: regular offering
basket: special offering
glass jar: loose change

earth prayer

the four sisters of everlasting beauty
directions, adapted from nancy wood by christine kraemer

we go forth to celebrate

announcements

passing of the peace *

you're invited to greet those around you by saying "peace be with you" or other words of welcome.

* *standing as able*

welcoming of the children song

(new words by debby loomis)

jesus loves the little children,
all the children of the world,
big or little, short or tall, jesus loves them one and all,
jesus loves the little children of the world.

carol *

"it came upon a midnight clear"
hymnal #218

benediction *

benedictory response *

"trees of the field"
adapted from isaiah 55:12

you shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;
the mountains and the hills will break forth before you;
there'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands,
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands, <clap clap>
the trees of the field will clap their hands, <clap clap>
the trees of the field will clap their hands, <clap clap>
while you go out with joy. (repeat)

staff

people of the congregation
community ministers

cy albertson –
accompanist

tim brace –
music and arts director

nichole crosson –
preschool coordinator

sid hall –
minister of celebration

elyse jensen –
teacher

kim longacre –
teacher

jean-paul marshall –
youth coordinator

laura e. mcmorris –
interim administrator

larry roberts –
weekend sexton



welcome!

it is a delight to have you share in this celebration. there are often people here for the first time, and we hope everyone feels welcome. a short introduction to trinity can be found on the back of this bulletin.

if you have a question, feel free to ask a staff person or someone near you who looks like they know what they are doing. they just might! you can learn more about trinity's mission and vision, or what it means to be a member of the church by contacting our pastor, dr. sid hall, at sid@tumc.org.

visitors

if you are visiting trinity for the first time, would like to update your member information, or want to volunteer, please use one of our envelopes on the chair backs. you may leave the envelopes in the basket during the offertory. thank you!

note: please turn off or silence your phones.

greetings

join sid in the center of the sanctuary for greetings after the celebration.

better than the a-list...

you can get on our e-list at <http://bit.ly/1614whY>!

- **trinity news and events list:** subscribers currently receive a weekly update and special announcements.
- **children's corner and youth news lists:** subscribers will soon begin receiving periodic newsletters and announcements.

envelopes

envelopes can be used to:

- provide or update your contact info;
- sign up for email updates or to volunteer;
- ensure your contribution goes to the correct fund and is credited to your giving statement.

simply put the envelope in an offering basket.

parking

help us be good neighbors! please park across speedway in either of our two lots, or in on-street spaces around trinity. avoid the lot immediately to the east of our building, bus zones, the loading zone in the front, bike lanes, or anywhere reserved for other businesses/entities. thank you!

special offering holiday baskets

each year at this time, trinity sponsors 10 families of students with very few resources who attend ridgetop elementary school. we provide h-e-b gift cards so these families can enjoy their own christmas meal. the families are always so excited and grateful to receive these blessings from all of us here at trinity. your generous offerings will allow us to continue this tradition of loving and supporting our neighbors.



fair trade coffee fund

just write "coffee fund" on your donation and place it in the special offering basket. your donation allows us to serve fair trade coffee on sundays and at other church events.

we ♥ our volunteers!

readers

- ♥ daniel brookshire
- ♥ elota patton

counters

- ♥ deb campbell
- ♥ paulette delahoussaye

other volunteers

- ♥ kathleen davis: kitchen clean up
- ♥ michelle renee edwards: bulletins
- ♥ krista gregory: kitchen laundry
- ♥ alison little: adding sermons & bulletins to the website
- ♥ susie tacchi: kitchen laundry
- ♥ trey & linda: sanctuary cleanup
- ♥ trinity finance team
- ♥ trinity leadership team
- ♥ trinity staff-parish relations team (especially deb campbell & marianne laguna)

"you were born from a ray of god's majesty and have the blessings of a good star." ~rumi