

The Quest

Trinity Church

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

December 2025

About Trinity Church

Trinity Church is an ecumenical Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation. We are affiliated with the American Baptist Church, the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church.

Sunday service hours:
10 a.m. (Nursery care is available.)

Office hours:
Monday - Wednesday - 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
Thursday – 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
(413) 625-2341

Pastor - Benjiman Durfee
Leadership Team Co-chairs:
Beth Martin & Wayne Perrea
Music Director - Keith Rollinson
Church Secretary - Brook Batteau
Nursery Attendant - Lisa Porter
Facilities Staff- Pat Valeski

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From Pastor Benjiman Durfee

Dear Trinity,

As we enter the sacred season of Advent, my heart is full of gratitude for the journey we have taken together this fall. Over these past months, we have reflected, prayed, discussed, and stretched ourselves through our study of *The Book of Joy*. We listened to the teachings of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama, not as distant ideas but as invitations to transform the way we live. And now, as Advent begins, I believe God is calling us to put all we have learned into practice—to become, in a very real sense, **harbingers of joy**.

Advent is many things at once: a season of waiting, preparation, wonder, longing, and holy anticipation. But at its core, Advent is fundamentally about **joy breaking into a weary world**. The angels proclaim it. Mary sings it. The prophets promise it. And in the birth of Jesus—God-with-us—joy takes on flesh and moves into the neighborhood.

This year, I feel a deep conviction that our church is being invited to embody this joy in a new and intentional way. Not a superficial joy, the kind that pretends everything is fine, but the durable, resilient, Gospel-shaped joy that coexists with the world's pain and speaks hope into it. The kind of joy that is a decision, a spiritual practice, and a gift from God all at once.

As we learned together this fall, joy grows when we choose gratitude over scarcity, compassion over indifference, forgiveness over bitterness, and generosity over fear. Joy grows when we slow down long enough to

notice God's presence among us. Joy grows when we hold each other's burdens and remind one another of the love that sustains us.

So this Advent, I want to invite us as a church to **live out our joy**—to let the joy we have cultivated spill outward into our community.

Let us be a light of joy for the lonely neighbor, the overwhelmed parent, the struggling student, and the hurried shopper. Let us be a light of joy for the friend who needs a listening ear, for the grieving family who needs gentle presence, for the hungry who need warmth and nourishment. Let us be a light of joy in worship, as we sing the promises of God. Let us be a light of joy in our homes, making space for prayer and peace amid the season's noise. And let us be a light of joy to one another—encouraging, uplifting, and reminding each other of the hope that is ours in Christ.

The world does not simply need more cheer; it needs **real joy**—the kind that is rooted in love, anchored in hope, and carried by people willing to shine. I believe Trinity Church is ready to be such people.

May this Advent season form us, surprise us, challenge us, and fill us with the joy of the One who is coming and who is already here.

With gratitude and joy,

Pastor Ben

CLOTHES CLOSET DECEMBER DATES

Wednesday:
the 10th, 11:00-3:30

Saturdays:
the 13th and 27th, 10:00-12:00

ADOPT-A-FAMILY 2025



Adopt a Family



Wrapped gifts for our 2 families must be at church by Sunday December 14. Please tape the gift tag to the package with the family number up and the description of the gift down. Money for gift cards is also due by the 14th.

Cash or checks made to Sue Mead.

Thank you for supporting this much needed mission.

FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

November slipped away ever so quickly! We hope you and yours will experience wonderful Thanksgiving Celebrations. Trinity Church along with the Friday Night Community Meal Team and The Shelburne Falls Women's Club hosted a very successful Thanksgiving Meal on Friday November 21st. Over 120 meals were served including those for take out. The entire fellowship hall was filled to the brim with laughter and conversation while folks enjoyed the delicious food! Many many Thanks to the Women's Club for donating all of the pies and to the team and all of you who joined forces to set up, prepare, serve and or clean up! We are truly blessed with a community of special people!

Nancy Parland has completed a very important mission! She worked with the company Vanco to create our own QR code which will allow people to make online donations. She has placed a flyer on our bulletin board, one in plexiglass on the table and will be placing post cards at the end of the pews with the QR code. Thank you Nancy for seeing this through to fruition!

This past Sunday a Fiddle Concert was held in our sanctuary. Approximately 70 musicians played amazing music to a packed house. Shout out to Gayle Davidson for her help! We look forward to having another musical event in our sanctuary on Nov. 30th. Sarah Pirtle has created a fabulous event that will include loads of songs and movement: Harvest of Hope" from 3:30- 5:30. Let the good times continue to roll in our beautiful church!

Moonlight Magic is a night of many wonderful things and we will be a part of the Magic again this year. Trinity will host an informational table during the entire evening. Thanks to all of you who have signed up to sit at the table and to Trinity men for setting up the table and our tent in case there may be a repeat snow assault!

This past month, Trinity Church launched a Go-Fund-Me fundraiser to help our beloved parishioners, Dusti and Karyn Dufresne. We have raised about a quarter of the goal and we are grateful to everyone who has donated! There is still time to contribute using the link: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-dusti-and-karyn-rebuild-after-crisis>

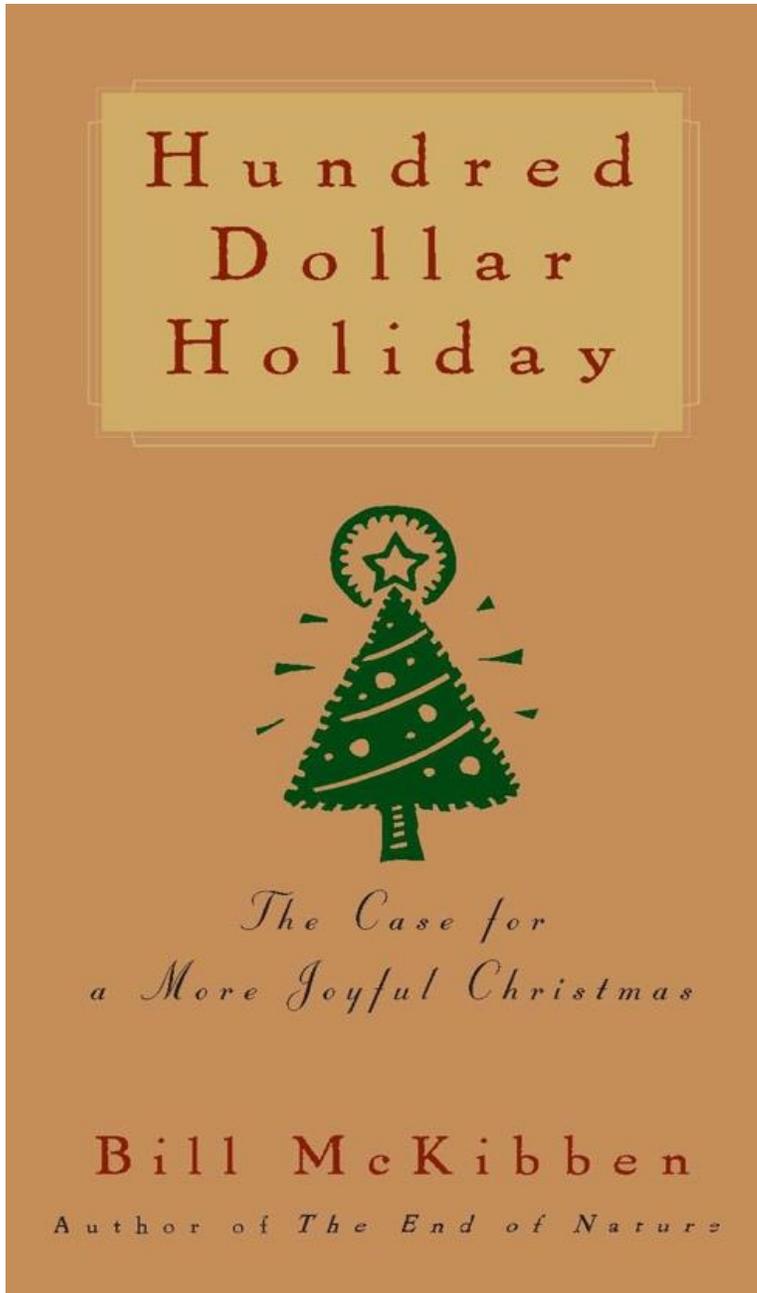
We are very grateful to Sue Mead who was able to organize a successful meal train for our beloved Lois Bascom when she was homebound with severe Lyme disease symptoms. Thank you of course to all those who signed up to bring meals as well!

We continue to pray for a full recovery for all those who have been sick these past few weeks, including Lois, Pastor Ben, Sarah Neelon, Gayle Davidson, Roger Parland, and others recovering from colds, Covid, seasonal depression, or other illnesses.

Onward now to a Faithful, Peaceful and Joyous Advent Season! With Many Blessings from The Leadership Team,

Sarah Neelon, Nancy Parland, Wayne Perrea and Beth Martin

WHAT'S PASTOR BEN READING?



When talking with Alison Cornish about trying to reimagine Christmas traditions that are simpler and greener, she recommended to me this book written in 1998 by Bill McKibben. It's a short book, only 95 pages about the size of an envelope, and in fact, I read it in one night. Tyler lovingly called me a nerd when he noticed that I had finished the book before I had even tossed the package it came in.

But the thing is, it was an answer to so much swirling around in my head and heart. The back of the book encapsulates it well: *Christmas should be something to enjoy rather than endure. Instead of an island of bustle, it should be an island of peace amid a busy life. We want so much more out of Christmas: more music, more companionship, more contemplation, more time outdoors, more love.*

The book is divided into three parts: the history of Christmas, the way we celebrate now (or at least how it was in 1998), and suggestions of how we can make Christmas more joyful. The main

suggestion was to try to limit the amount of money we spend at Christmas to about a hundred dollars per family; not as a way to save money, but as a way to spur creativity. McKibben's experience was that it ended up bringing more joy, both to the preparation time for Christmas and to the actual celebration, bringing the focus on family and time spent together and less on the commercialized idea of trying to buy the best presents.

I highly recommend this short little book to anyone who is looking to make more meaning at Christmastime, to families that might be trying to navigate changing traditions as families change, or to anyone who is just looking for a little more joy this holiday season.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL AND SMALL GROUP

This Advent, we will view the Advent Mystery of New Beginnings through the eyes of the natural world using Gayle Boss’ beautiful devotional, *All Creation Waits*. The book offers 25 daily reflections, each revealing the miraculous ways northern hemisphere animals adapt to the dark and cold of winter. Perfect for anyone longing to escape consumerism and embrace the sacred mysteries of Advent, *All Creation Waits* reminds us that we are part of a creation that “waits in eager expectation.” This devotional is not just a book but an invitation—to pause, reflect, and marvel at the eternal lessons found in the natural world. Pastor Ben will lead an in-person, small group devotion time and discussion on **Tuesday evenings in Advent (December 2, 9, 16, 23) from 6:30-8:00pm in Trinity’s conference room**. Books are available for a \$15 donation (financial assistance is available). For questions or to sign up, please email Pastor Ben at pastordurfee@gmail.com.

CHOIR ALERT!

Now that I have your attention, please consider singing (again!) with the Trinity Choir this Christmas season. With a late Thanksgiving this year, we will only have three Thursday evening rehearsals, starting on December 4. Please mark your calendars – and I guarantee you will feel better for singing this season! More info as the time approaches – meanwhile looking forward to some joyful noise.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS 2025

If you wish to remember loved ones and help decorate the sanctuary by ordering a live poinsettia plant, please fill in this form and place it in the collection plate or return it to the church office by Friday, Dec. 12.

This year poinsettias are \$9/each. Please make checks payable to Trinity Church and note “Christmas poinsettia” in the memo line. Plants not picked up will be donated to our elder parishioners and others who are not able to attend the worship service.



In memory of _____

Given by _____

In honor of _____

Given by _____

Total number of plants _____



CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

LESSONS AND CAROLS
AND BRINGING OUT THE CHRIST CHILD

DECEMBER 24 AT 7 P.M.
TRINITY CHURCH
17 SEVERANCE ST.
SHELBURNE FALLS, MA

NEW! ELECTRONIC GIVING

We've officially launched our electronic giving with an official QR code.

*Support Trinity Church with Electronic Giving
Your financial gift makes a difference.*

It supports our mission & ministry; our outreach programs; and provides the necessary resources to care for our church building and grounds, enabling us to share our sacred space with the wider community.



This QR code is also a link to click on

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2025

Monday	1	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	2	6:30 pm All Creation Waits
Wednesday	3	9:30 Playgroup; Climate Chorus (7-8:30 pm)
Thursday	4	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	5	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	6	
Sunday	7	10 am. Service
Monday	8	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	9	6:30 pm All Creation Waits
Wednesday	10	9:30 Playgroup; 11 - 3:30 Clothes Closet
Thursday	11	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA; Choir
Friday	12	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	13	10 am -12 pm Clothes Closet
Sunday	14	10 am service
Monday	15	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	16	6:30 pm All Creation Waits
Wednesday	17	9:30 Playgroup; Climate Chorus (7-8:30 pm)
Thursday	18	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA; Choir
Friday	19	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	20	
Sunday	21	10 am service
Monday	22	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	23	6:30 pm All Creation Waits
Wednesday	24	7 pm Christmas Eve Service
Thursday	25	7 pm AA
Friday	26	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	27	10 am -12 pm Clothes Closet
Sunday	28	10 am service
Monday	29	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	30	
Wednesday	31	9:30 Playgroup

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LECTIONARY FOR DECEMBER 2025	
December 7	Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
December 14	Isaiah 35:1-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11; Psalm 146:4-9 or Canticle 15 [or Canticle 3]
December 21	Isaiah 7:10-16; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25; Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18
December 28	Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7; John 1:1-18; Psalm 147 or 147:13-21

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