The Chronicles of Trinity and Quinnesec UMCs

A tale of two churches intertwined by faith, community, and the pursuit of a greater purpose.

December 2026

Pastor Ron Bennett, (906)282-3740 imtrinityumc@gmail.com quinnesecumc@yahoo.com

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Where Do You Find Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love?
An Advent reflection for preparation of the first week of the season.

Every year the four candles appear, and every year the same four words are spoken over them: hope, peace, joy, and love. We light them in order, one each week, and by Christmas Eve the wreath is full of light. But if we are honest, the words can begin to feel like decorations themselves — lovely, familiar, and a little too easy. So it is worth asking plainly: where do these four things actually come from? And what do they do to us while we wait?

Advent is a season of expectant waiting. We wait for the celebration of Christ's birth, and we wait for Christ's return. That waiting is not empty time to be filled with shopping and scheduling. It is formative time. What we become while we wait matters as much as what we are waiting for. And Scripture gives us two very different postures for that waiting — one of lament, one of joy — and Advent holds both.

Waiting That Laments

The prophets did not soften the day of the Lord. Ezekiel is told to wail over it: "Wail, 'Woe to the day!' For the day is near, even the day of the Lord is near; it will be a day of clouds, the time of the Gentiles" (Ezekiel 30:1-3). Joel sounds an alarm and calls the whole land to tremble, because the day of the Lord is coming, and it is at hand (Joel 2:1).

This is not the cheerful language we expect from a season of candles. But it is honest language, and Advent needs it. The prophets wept over a world that had wandered, over judgment that was real, over a people who needed rescuing and did not always know it. If we cannot lament, we cannot long for anything. Hope that has never grieved is not hope; it is optimism. The one who waits in lament is the one who has finally admitted that the world is not as it should be — and that we cannot fix it ourselves. That admission is where hope begins.

Waiting That Rejoices

But Advent does not leave us in the dark. Jesus tells us plainly that "of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matthew 24:36). The timing is not ours to manage. And then He tells us what the waiting is *for*: the Son of Man comes in glory, and He separates the nations as a shepherd separates sheep from goats, and He says to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:31-34).

That is joy — not a happy ending bolted onto the story, but the arrival of the King Himself. Notice that the joy is not something we manufacture. It is an inheritance, prepared before we were born. Our joy is incomplete and unsustainable on its own; it becomes full only when it is joined to Christ's joy, and Christ's joy is always shared. It is found in the kingdom, and the kingdom is found in Him.

Where the Four Are Found

So where do hope, peace, joy, and love come from?

They are not moods we work up, and they are not rewards for having a good year. They are gifts that meet us in the waiting. Hope is born in lament, when we finally tell the truth about the world and hand it to God. Peace comes not from the absence of trouble but from the presence of the One who holds the day and the hour. Joy arrives when we stop trying to secure our own happy ending and receive the kingdom prepared for us. And love — love is what we do with the waiting. It is the fruit borne in us as we abide in Christ, reaching out to others even when it costs something.

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Christmas Eve
Worship Services
Thursday, December 24



5:00 p.m. Worship at Quinnesec United Methodist Church

7:00 p.m. Worship at Trinity United Methodist Church

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

Dec. 1 Emma Bouchard
2 Hope Ann Blagec, Heidi Harwell
Joyce Trevillian
4 Gracie Hilyard
5 Lucy Shampo
7 Deb Saul
12 Loren Potter, Kassidy Schaut
14 Dayna Hodgins, Carol LaFave
17 Jason Bouchard, Jim & Bonnie Talerico
19 Lauren Smart, Frank Trumbell
21 Daniel Kuder, Jerry & Heidi Harwell
22 Ron Deloria
23 Noelle Champagne
25 Jesus Christ, Larry Yarck
26 Megan Rose
29 Sophia Hayes, Paul & Kim Mariucci
30 Riley Gauthier, Kim Wilcox

Our condolences to John and Joyce Erickson. John's cousin Eric Pike died in October. Joyce's uncle Paul Montri died in October.

Our condolences to Henry and Ruth Ann Badini, whose grandson Jacob Strauss died on November 3.

Those in nursing homes or shut-ins are…

Evergreen: Larry Bonicatto
Freeman's: Allen Alleva, Phyllis Noordhoff, Joyce Trevillian
Optalis: Virginia West
At home: Bobby Holt, Lorene Nelson, Sue Youngberg

Piano Players at Quinnesec UMC this month:

December 13 Sandi Adams
December 27 Maribelle Adams





United Women in Faith's Christmas Potluck Gathering is Thursday, December 10, at 6 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall at Trinity UMC. All women are welcome to attend. Please bring a dish to pass. We will be doing a White Elephant gift exchange. We will also take up a monetary collection to gift to someone in need this holiday season.

Please call Lea Varda at (906)282-6706 or the church office at (906)774-2545 to let us know if you will be attending or have any questions. This will help for setting up seating.



Quinnesec UMC's Fellowship Sunday is December 20. Coffee and snacks will be served downstairs after worship, as we enjoy fellowship time together.

Quinnesec UMC is Collecting Christmas Blessings in December for Mission Bible Training Center

Help us spread the love of Christ this Christmas season to those struggling with addiction by supporting residents of the Mission Bible Training Center in Gaastra, Michigan.

We are collecting personal care/hygiene items (shampoo, body wash, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc.) for residents of the Center during November and December. A donation box is in the narthex. Christmas cards with encouraging notes are appreciated, also! For many of the residents, this is the only Christmas gift they will receive.

The Mission Bible Training Center is non-denominational and is a not-for-profit 501 (C) 3 faith ministry. The goal of the Center is to help people who have life-controlling problems, such as drug or alcohol addictions, by ministering the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them. Thank you for supporting this awesome mission!

Where Do You Find Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love?
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This is the Wesleyan heartbeat of Advent: the sense that God's grace is already at work, surprising us, meeting us in the ordinary, and calling us forward. The waiting is not passive. It is the workshop where character is forged.

How It Changes the Waiting

When you know where the four gifts come from, expectant waiting changes shape.

You stop waiting anxiously and start waiting attentively. You notice things — God's creation, the Spirit's quiet diversions, the moments of laughter that arrive unplanned. You take time for the journey and not only the destination. You let the lament be real, and you let the joy be real too, because both belong to a people who know the day is coming and know Who is bringing it.

When we light the first candle this Advent season and ask the question honestly: *Where am I finding hope, peace, joy, and love right now?* Not where you are supposed to find them. Where you actually are. Then bring what you find — and what you cannot find — into the waiting. The One who is coming has already prepared the kingdom. He is not late. He is not absent. And He is not finished with you yet.

Blessings to all, Pastor Ron

Trinity and Quinnesec UMC Annual Lake Lundgren Outing



Our annual winter fun and fellowship at Lake Lundgren Bible Camp (LLBC) in Pembine, Wisconsin is planned for **Sunday, January 31, 2027, beginning at 1:30 p.m.** All are welcome!

It'll be a fun-filled afternoon for all ages with outdoor winter activities (weather permitting), including tubing, ice skating, cross-country skiing, broomball, and so much more! For those who prefer to stay indoors, there are board games, ping-pong, carpet pool, and a warm fireplace with fellowship.

After our time of recreation, we will enjoy a potluck meal together. We ask that each family/person bring a dish or snack to pass. They have a full kitchen we can use.

We will meet at Quinnesec United Methodist Church at 1:00 p.m. to caravan to Lake Lundgren Bible Camp in Pembine (N18250 Lake Lane) off of Highway 8. You can also meet us there if you know the way.

LLBC will provide us with everything we need. They have skates and cross-country skis of all sizes, along with tubes for tubing. You may bring your own skates, cross country skis, or broomball stick if you'd prefer. You can also bring your favorite inside games.

Cost for the day is $2 per person if you're participating only in indoor activities, and $8 per person for outdoor activities. The maximum cost per family is $21.

We look forward to seeing everyone! A sign-up sheet will be posted at each church so we can let them know how many are coming. We need to give them an approximate number of those attending two weeks prior to the event. What a wonderful way to spend a Sunday afternoon in God's great outdoors and enjoy Christian fellowship together.

Good News for Givers in 2026

Beginning in 2026, you may be able to deduct up to $1,000 ($2,000 for married couples) of your charitable giving, even if you take the standard deduction. Your generosity to your United Methodist Church not only advances God's mission—it may also reduce your tax bill, but please consult with your tax advisor.

Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of your church.

At Trinity UMC, December's Mission of the Month is the Global Center for Reconciliation or GCR.

GCR is led by Smohan Gaurav in partnership with Amie Tyler of Living Waters Church in Oregon. They provide a broad range of services to people of India who are experiencing socio-economic persecution due to the caste system.

Smohan and fellows travel throughout India sharing the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They have outdoor revivals, demonstrating the washing of feet, and distribute food at gatherings. Their newly-built worship center serves as a hub in the community for worship services, teaching reading and writing literacy skills, and sewing. Your donations helped build the worship center. Earlier this year, your donations helped to provide seating in the worship center.

Please consider a generous donation to this Mission of the Month to assist Smohan to continue to deliver the message of Jesus Christ to those who otherwise would not hear this good news.

Please make your check payable to Trinity UMC, and indicate that it's for the Mission of the Month. Thank you.

—The Trinity UMC Engaged Ministry Team

Upcoming Feeding America trucks include:

- Thursdays, December 3, February 4, and April 1 at Grace Methodist Church, 130 Odill Dr., Norway. Check-in starts at 3 p.m.
- Wednesdays, December 9, January 13, and February 10 at Redemption Hill Church, 332 S. Carpenter Ave., Kingsford. Check-in starts at 9 a.m.

At Trinity UMC, Noisy Offerings are collected usually on the second Sunday of each month. Your coins go to the Mission of the Month. Thanks for your generosity!



Never Had It Summed Up Like This Before

Why go to Church?

I think this is fantastic; I just love the guy's answer, and the interpretation for the word BIBLE. Enjoy it and pass it on.

A Church-goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. He wrote, "I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time, I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, and the preachers and priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column. Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher: "I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals, but for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the impossible! Thank God for our spiritual nourishment! IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN ALL, YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL! B.I.B.L.E. simply means: Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth. –Unknown author

Joy Crafters meet on Mondays at 10 a.m. at Trinity UMC. Bring your own craft, coloring book, scrapbooking materials, or something else you enjoy doing, and join us.

Quinnesec UMC's Mission Statement:
"The Mission of the Quinnesec United Methodist Church is to win persons to salvation in Jesus Christ by sharing God's love, nurturing spiritual growth, caring for the needy, providing meaningful worship, praying, and participating in mission opportunities at home."

Trinity UMC's Mission Statement:
"Sharing God's Love with Those Who Hunger"

Throughout this newsletter, (T) stands for Trinity UMC, and (Q) stands for Quinnesec UMC.

I
love
a star,
a wreath,
a shopping
list, a crowd,
a gift, a time
of worship, a toy,
a child, a colored
ball, a party, a kiss,
a family together, the
sound of laughter, turkey
'n mince pie, joy and peace,
a tree of lights, the glow of
candles, the faith of a child, the
sound of bells and an angel's song,
a season of wonder and togetherness,
a
world
at
peace
filled with love
and goodwill
toward all
mankind.

Coffee Hour Help Wanted—At Trinity UMC, we are looking for additional people to set up coffee and treats on a Sunday morning. It's easy. Heidi or Lea can walk you through the set up. Contact Lea Varda at (906)282-6706 if you are interested.



And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ...

John 1:14, ESV

Trinity & Quinnesec United Methodist Churches
c/o 808 Carpenter Ave.
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

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The Chronicles of Trinity and Quinnesec United Methodist Churches



December 2026

Quinnesec United Methodist Church
Sunday worship at 9:00 a.m., (906)774-7971
677 Division St., P.O. Box 28, Quinnesec, MI 49876.
Pastor: Rev. Ron Bennett

Trinity United Methodist Church
Sunday worship at 10:30 a.m., (906)774-2545
808 Carpenter Ave., Iron Mountain, MI 49801
imtrinity.org imtrinityumc@gmail.com
facebook.com/imtrinityumc
Pastor: Rev. Ron Bennett
Secretary: Sally Verley
Custodian: Larry Marlett
Choir Director: Jeremiah Garrigues-Cortelyou
Accompanist: Rosalie Rasmussen
Technology: Kathryn Bilgreen, Jeremiah Garrigues-Cortelyou



