

FEBRUARY
2026

Trinity Topics



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Humanity's Faithful Living

By Rev. Dr. Wayne Menard

Dear friends,

Theologians look for evidence of God working in their world. They plumb human experience and measure what they discover against the centuries of humanity's faithful living with God. What they discover may surprise them, but more often than not, they uncover patterns of behaviour that repeat themselves, over and over.

Recently, in Davos, Switzerland, our prime minister delivered what many have called a seminal speech to world leaders. He was praised for his courage and his message of hope in these difficult times. Another speech was given in Davos by the President of the United States of America that, was largely condemned as a self-serving display of American pomposity and hubris—without hope and without grace.

An expression in French translates as "the more things change, the more they remain the same." In other words, we sometimes find ourselves bound by ways of being with each other that are very difficult to change.

Theologians don't look for change.
They don't look for something new.
They look to see if who we understand
God to be is reflected in our lives, in
our everyday goings-on.

Our prime minister didn't say anything new in Davos. He didn't create a new world order or invent a unique or innovative economic strategy yet unseen or untested. He merely reminded us of a way of being in the world that is familiar to any Canadian. He reflected a way of life that values human decency and respect. He told the world that bullying and threats create mistrust and fear that devalues the community.

A theologian would hear these words and be reminded of dozens, if not hundreds, of examples in the history of our faith tradition

where women and men put the community in which they live and love before any personal enrichment.

This is evidence of God working in the world. This is not new. It is a sign for us that God is indeed working in our global community.

A founding principle of the United Church of Canada is the pursuit of justice, as most clearly demonstrated in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. When Jesus condemned the religious authorities in Palestine and the political occupiers sent by Rome, he did so from within a tradition of justice and compassion where the community was encouraged to live out values that were received and blessed by the living God. These were not new values or new ways of being with each other. They were long-held traditions, maintained through centuries of life together as the people of God.

Theologians look for evidence of justice, compassion, love, and grace that permeate the moral weave of the scriptures, the writings of men and women who experienced God's grace within the ecclesia, and the courageous speeches of those who know the difference between friend and bully.

Theologians may not seek change but they can draw us back into the light of God so we can see the face of our neighbours and know they are friends. I can't help but think that our prime minister's commitment to social justice, his deep faith, and his clear articulation of God's grace make him a pretty good theologian.

We saw evidence of God working among us in Davos. Not in those spewing hatred and fear but in the considered restatement of Canadian values that were shaped, in part, by the United Church of Canada.

Wayne

The Legacy of a Former UCC Moderator

By Sheila Meggs

The Very Rev. Dr. Norman Bruce McLeod, 25th moderator of the United Church of Canada, died on January 13 at the age of 96. Social justice was the focus of his ministry. After serving as moderator from 1972-74, he became a commissioner for the Ontario Human Rights Commission. He also went on a year-long mission to Costa Rica where he helped set up a cooperative residential village for abandoned children. He returned to ministry several churches. He championed women's rights, including the right to bodily autonomy, was outspoken against racism, and was an early ally of 2SLGBTQ+ community. In a recent article in [Broadview](#), readers were asked to send memories of him, and I submitted the following.

When I was enrolled at McMaster university in 1966, I attended Westdale United Church. I chose it because it was a walkable distance from my residence on campus, but I stayed because of the minister, Rev Dr Bruce McLeod.

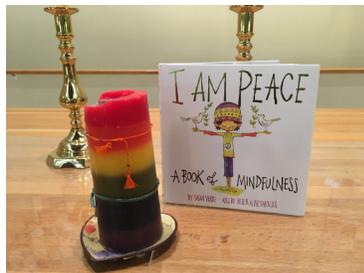
I had grown up on a farm near Paris, Ontario and attended St Paul's United in Paris. The minister there was conservative and conventional. His sermons were based on biblical texts to which I could not relate and quite frankly were rather boring.

Dr McLeod's sermons opened up a whole new world for me. He referenced books like **The Catcher in the Rye** to further explain

religious texts. He was an articulate and passionate speaker. He made the Bible come alive for me and talked about issues in the real world. I looked forward to going to church!

His attitudes obviously affected how I now see "church." I belong to Trinity United Church in Ottawa, a progressive and affirming church which welcomes and celebrates all genders, races, differing mental and physical abilities. As a recovering alcoholic, I feel accepted and comfortable there.

Thank you Dr McLeod for your life and service.



Community Veterinary Outreach (CVO)

Human and Animal Health

By Mike Velichka

On Saturday, January 31, Trinity was the venue for a clinic put on by the [Community Veterinary Outreach](#).

Trinity was introduced to CVO by Hanna Curry, who attended Trinity before moving to Guelph to attend Ontario Veterinary College.

CVO serves people in communities with different needs, challenges and opportunities. All clients are unhoused, under-housed, or vulnerably housed. Referrals by a case worker or health worker are required for access.

The service is based on a **One Health** model. It is a collaboration between human and animal health partners, with an understanding that the health of humans and animals and the social and physical environment are interconnected.

During these events, veterinary professionals provide physical exams, nail trims and grooming for the pets. They also provide pet food and supplies. Human services include healthy living and exercise advice, smoking reduction and cessation, primary health care including flu vaccination, dental care access, and harm reduction (naloxone kits, safe injection supplies).

There are plans to host four of these sessions annually, and we are pleased to be able to assist by providing free space.



Clients/Pets	
Total number of clients served	35
Total number of pets served	46
Number of cats	20
Number of dogs	25
Number of other animals	1

One Health Services	
Smoking Cessation (NRT - patches, gums, lozenges, sprays)	6
Dental/Oral care, supplies, consultations, or referrals	28
Harms reduction (naloxone, clean kits, needle exchange, safe inhalation, etc.)	7
Social services (social worker consult, housing support, community referral)	18
Mental health support (counselling, support in vet appointment, referral)	18
Hand care	8
Vision support (OneSight): free eyeglasses / vouchers	18
Clothing distribution	24

Hours	
Number of Volunteer Vet hours at this event	49
Number of Volunteer Vet Technician / Vet Assistant / Student hours at this event	60
Number of One Health Volunteer hours at this event (incl. Nurses/nurse practitioners, Pharmacists, Dental Hygienists, Social Workers, Physicians, Health Students, etc.)	94
Number of Admin hours for this event (activities before event incl. scheduling appointment times, communicating with referring workers, volunteer coordination, clinic prep/ordering, etc.)*	225
Number of Regional Director hours for this event	30



Knitting &

Our "You Don't Have to Knit" group has so much fun together!

Where would you ever find a happier group of women? Nowhere. We meet Monday afternoons to work on gorgeous or just really cute knitted items, most of which are for sale at the Christmas bazaars. The really cool thing is— that I certainly appreciate—you don't have to knit to join. Just come and sip tea, munch on a snack, laugh and yak.

Sheila Meggs is our leader, and she makes her veranda available for warm weather meetings. Unfortunately Sheila was not present when this Christmas get-together photo was taken (we missed you, Sheila) but here's the rest of the group.



From left to right, back row then front row:
Back row (left to right): Danielle, Gayle, Barb, Kristi, Heather, Rosemary, Shirley, Laurie, Janet, Shirley
Seated: (left to right): Helen, Carolyn, Liz



Outreach

By Jean Meldrum

During these challenging times the Outreach Committee continues to focus financial support on the **Caldwell Family Centre**. Our budget goes to the **Food Bank** every month. Through the generous support of our congregation we are also able add other projects.

- Twice a year we provide food donations and moral support to students at the **Pause Table** at Carleton University during the stressful exam times, when students don't take time to eat or they are short of funds to buy food. (Photos of Pause Table prep below.)
- The congregation supports our **Festival of Sharing** campaign to provide extra food items for Christmas hampers.
- This winter we collected a generous amount of warm clothing for our **Winter Warmth** project.

The Outreach committee is blessed to be a part of an amazing congregation that cares for those people outside of our walls. We are truly blessed.



A Note from the Caldwell Family Centre

Thank you for your generous support and partnership with the Caldwell Family Centre as we work to create opportunities for members of the Caldwell Community and beyond.

Your support has many faces.

Perhaps the funds you donated provided a group of people in our **Drop-in Centre** with a nutritious meal enjoyed in the company of a compassionate volunteer developer? Was the young woman from Nigeria who arrived alone, fleeing violence, searching for a home of her own and willing to work hard, stirring soup in a bowl that your generous donation funded?

Every year we imagine a time when our neighbours will live free of the life-altering effects of poverty. But with the rising cost of food and low wages, hopelessness exacerbated by isolation and poor health have increased.

Currently, **1 in 4 children in Ottawa live in food-insecure households.**

- Our kitchen prepares and distributes up to **500 hot meals** each day.
- We provide **groceries twice a month to approximately 2,400 unique Caldwell area residents.**

The board and staff of the Caldwell Family Centre look forward with a sense of optimism for a brighter future, and knowing that you are by our side in support means everything.

Thank you again from all of us and on behalf of so many touched by your kindness. Drop by for lunch sometime. We would love to see you!

Once again, Pitch (im)Perfect singers collected an impressive amount of cash and goods for our outreach programs.

Find out more at [Pitch \(im\)Perfect](#)



Men's Breakfast

By John Comfort

For more than 20 years Trinity United men have been gathering to share a meal, catch up on the passion of other participants, plan for ways we can support the church or associated non-profit groups and, very importantly, reflect on the selected scripture for the following Sunday.

We have been welcomed at Summerhays Grill, and we are thankful that the restaurant is close at hand and is flexible to respond to our needs. The numbers vary, and there have been new faces who have joined us.

There is a true desire from the group to be involved in the new outreach our church is planning: to be a place of welcome for neighbours and a church that listens to those who are seeking a place of belonging.

Come and join us on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 8:00 a.m. at Summerhays Grill and be a part of a group that nourishes spiritually and with a good meal—and with the sharing of our stories.



We are always grateful to the Men's Breakfast group for providing our Christmas tree!

Christmas Memories



Trinity Refugee Committee

By Mike Velichka

The committee continues to work with [Capital Rainbow Refuge \(CRR\)](#) on sponsorship of transgender refugees, "Hope" and "Beth," from East Africa.

Working with a sponsorship oversight group is new to Trinity, and our committee is grateful for the ongoing mentorship provided by volunteers at CRR.

Although the sponsorship process can seem slow, both cases have been moving forward. By September 2025 Beth had completed both the interview stage and medical assessments as part of the process for permanent residency. Hope had her interview in January 2026, with medical assessments to follow. With no clear approval as of yet, it is anticipated that Beth will arrive in Ottawa by spring of 2026. It is still too early to gauge when Hope may arrive. With the first arrival expected soon, our committee has begun to prepare for implementation of the settlement plan for Beth.

Of the sponsorship money that Trinity is required to fundraise, currently we are at about 85% of the total. As we are now sponsoring two refugees, we are left with this small deficit. Once we have confirmation of an arrival date, our committee will renew fundraising to reach the final total. Committee members continue to provide personal monthly donations to support costs associated with accommodation, food and other incidentals for Hope and Beth.

We continue to engage with and emotionally support Hope and Beth through frequent phone calls and chats on WhatsApp. The monthly financial support has allowed them to reside in a way that reduces their exposure to the ever-present persecution of the LGBTQ+ community in their environment. The regular accounts of persecution are heartbreaking. Their daily living comes with a balance of safety and risk. The selection of markets to buy food, the time of day, and transportation all come with safety considerations. Even the dialect from their country of origin will expose them as refugees, which in turn links them to the LGBTQ+ community based on common reasons for seeking asylum, so they limit communication in unfamiliar settings. Of all the refugee groups, the LGBTQ+ community, especially those who are transgender, are at the greatest risk of assault and death.

Both Hope and Beth are truly appreciative of Trinity. When we were first introduced to them, their state of mental and emotional wellbeing was not healthy. It is inspiring to see the many changes over time. It has instilled new confidence in their current circumstance and future life in Canada.



Trinity Jubilee Foundation (TJF)



By Rosemary Gibb

At our annual general meeting on January 18, I stepped down after two 3-year terms as president. Helen Shaw completed a 3-year term on the board and also stepped down. Helen and I both considered it a pleasure being a part of TJF, and we encourage all of you to continue your support of this very important and useful organization.

The board was pleased to approve Helen Barkley as the next president. We also welcomed two new members: Alec Champoux and Carol Godin-Mutter.

Watch for coming news about the TJF campaign and Sunday service. Our plant and bake sale last spring was a hit so TJF will be organizing another one.



Photos from the 2025 TJF Plant and Bake Sale

TJF: 25 Years of Worthwhile Work

Guided by the principle, **Improving health, education and self- sufficiency in the world**, TJF has made 77 funding awards totalling over \$360,000 over the last 25 years.

Thank you again for your generous support in the past and your consideration this year. It allows us to continue this worthwhile work, in Canada and beyond.

Upcoming Events

- **Bev Carrick** (Embrace International) will join us for a brief update on February 22.
- **The formal campaign** will begin April 19 and will run for the next three weeks.
- **Plant and Bake Sale**, May 9.

Disability: Are You Willing?

By Pam Sheehan

27% of Canadians age 15+ identify as being disabled.

—Statistics Canada 2025

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

By Pam Sheehan

To look at me
What do you see?
Is it my eyes opaque and round,
or drooling mouth
With its strange sound?
Do you wonder how this could be
That one would want to live like me.
But God made me to be your friend
An equal partner 'til our end.
For beauty lives within each soul
But
Outer coverings take a toll.
A toll on spirit, hurt and pain.
Remember well to look at me,
Not stare in judgment, feeling shame,
But
See as one with hopes and dreams,
For by God's Grace, we are the same.

Many of us have a fixed image of what a disabled person looks like. The truth is that disability can be invisible, especially to a stranger. Mental health, dementia, pain, pride, are just a few reasons why a person may remain hidden from society, from judgment. Those living with disability often struggle in the shadows with poverty, employment, healthcare and myriad other challenges of managing in our increasingly technical world.

The Disability Poverty Report Card 2025 provides a snapshot of poverty among people with disabilities in Canada. Drawing on the most recent data from Statistics Canada's Canadian Income Survey (2023) and Canadian Survey on Disability (2022), the report tracks income, employment, and social indicators to assess progress—or lack thereof—addressing disability poverty across the country. Last year, this report card gave the federal government a failing grade (F). This year, the grade has risen only slightly to D. While the Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) began its rollout in July 2025, the \$200 per month payment remains too little for too few, leaving one and a half million people below the poverty line, with many barriers to access remaining.

Ontario government cuts to our education system, especially those affecting children with disabilities, leaves parents struggling to access supports for their child. Families facing hardship in these economic times may need to care for a parent who is sliding into worsening dementia and declining health. They will find a health system that is increasingly not there for them.

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Affordability of assisted living care for the disabled is out of reach for many. The lack of adequate OHIP-covered homecare supports continues to be a challenging reality.

It is in these times churches, community, and neighbours are needed more than ever to recognize those among us who are struggling with a disability or that of a family member. It is up to us to reach out to help. We cannot wait for a government saviour. As individuals, or together in our church family, we can make a difference in the lives of others. This difference can be simply by being present, listening to another's challenges and pain, and helping in day-to-day life as we are able. As a community of faith, one that believes in justice and equality, we should be the voice of those who struggle by challenging our elected officials to lift our neighbours and friends out of poverty, make our communities accessible to all, provide adequate healthcare in our homes where we want it , and

make our education system a place where our children feel safe, supported and living up to their potential.

In closing, A portion of "Keeping Christmas" by Henry Van Dyke, 1905.

Are you willing ...

to see that men and women are just as real as you are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy

Take the time to express your concerns:

Federal:

- Hon. Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca

Provincial:

- Hon. Raymond Cho, Minister of Seniors and Accessibility raymond.cho@pc.ola.org
- Hon. Paul Calandra, Minister of Education paul.calandra@pc.ola.org



On November 2, 2025, we remembered our cherished loved ones.

Dorothy Anstee, Anthea Brandon, A.J. (Pete) Conley, Jennifer Cuddy,
Rick Galway, Roy McLeod, Wendy Sauve



Trinity's Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 8
after worship

[2025 Annual Report](#)



Articles for Trinity Topics are gratefully accepted.
The editors reserve the right to edit all material.

**Deadline for next edition:
Sunday, April 19, 2026**

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