



TRINITY ST. PAUL'S
UNITED CHURCH
FAITH JUSTICE ARTS

January 11th, 2026 – 10:30 am

*Third Sunday of Christmas
Baptism of Jesus*

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

"We gather at the water's edge, ready for a new beginning."

Prelude: *Deep River*, African-American Spiritual, arr. by Roberta Rowland-Raybold

Acknowledgment of Traditional Territory

Thomas McKechnie

As we gather in this new year, we remember that long before our calendars turned and our stories unfolded, this land was a sacred place of life, relationship, and responsibility for many peoples of Turtle Island. We acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of several Indigenous Nations and offer particular respect to the Mississaugas of the Credit, whose care for this land continues. As a new year begins, we also recognize that the work of justice is unfinished. The voices of the original nations still call us to truth, healing, and accountability.

As treaty people, we renew our commitment to listen with humility, to learn with openness, and to act with courage, working together to repair past and present harms and to walk more faithfully toward right relationship in the year ahead.

Lighting of the Christ & Community Candles

On this Baptism of Jesus Sunday,
we light the Christ Candle,
remembering the Light that came into the world and still shines through every storm, every silence, every new beginning. *(The Christ Candle is lit)*

And we light the Community Candle,
honouring the Spirit who gathers us,
claims us, and sends us as beloved children. *(The Community Candle is lit)*

As these flames rise,

**we remember that baptism is not simply an event,
it is a calling, a promise, and a beginning again.**

Words of Welcome

Welcome to Trinity-St. Paul's United Church on the second Sunday of the New Year. Whether you are here in the sanctuary or joining us from online, your presence enriches this circle of faith and makes our worship whole. Come as you are, whether seeking renewal, carrying questions, holding gratitude, and longing for new beginnings. Here, the Spirit meets us. Christ walks with us. God calls each of us beloved. Welcome home. Welcome to worship!

Gathering Words:

The voice of God echoes over the waters,
calling creation into being and calling us beloved.
The Spirit moves, stirring renewal, awakening hope.
We come to the water's edge, ready for a sacred beginning.
Christ steps into the Jordan, blessing the ordinary with holy purpose.
We follow in faith, seeking courage for the journey ahead.
Come, people of God,
Let us worship the One who names us, claims us, and sends us in love.

Hymn: *VU100 When Jesus Comes To Be Baptized* (vv. 1,4-5)

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | When Jesus comes to be baptized,
he leaves the hidden years behind,
the years of safety and of peace,
to bear the sins of humankind. | to walk in truth and justice now,
and grow in Christian dignity. |
| 4 | O Spirit help us be like Christ:
to live in love and charity, | 5
We praise you, God, source of all life,
we praise you, Christ, eternal Word,
we praise you, Spirit, gracious gift;
your triune presence fills our world. |

Opening Prayer

Silent Confession

Words of Peace & Passing of the Peace:

In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus rose to a voice that said,
"You are my Beloved." (Matthew 3:17)
This is our word of life.
**Thanks be to God,
we, too, are named, claimed, and loved.**
The God whose voice thunders over mighty waters (Psalm 29)
speaks peace to all creation.
**May that peace settle in us,
renew us, and lead us.**
(You are invited to share signs of peace in the sanctuary, and those online are encouraged to type or speak a word of peace in the chat.)

Anthem: *At the River*, adapted by Aaron Copland, arr. by R. Wilding White

WE GROW IN FAITH

"We grow as we listen for the voice that still speaks: 'Beloved.'"

Introduction to the Scripture:

Lorna Niebergall

The scriptures draw us toward the water, toward the place where Israel crossed into freedom, and where Jesus steps into the Jordan to begin his ministry. Psalm 29 calls us to listen for the voice of God, a voice strong enough to shatter cedars, yet tender enough to bless with peace. Matthew 3 brings us to the riverbank, where the heavens open, the Spirit descends, and Christ hears the words we all long to hear: "You are my Beloved; with you I am well pleased." Let us listen with open hearts for the Word that restores, reshapes, and renews us.

Scriptures: Psalm 29 (Inclusive Bible)
Matthew 3:13-17 (Inclusive Bible)

Herein is wisdom.

Thanks be to God.

Response: VU, 958 Halle, Halle, Hallelujah

Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Sermon: *"Epiphany Baptism: Sacred Beginnings"*

Silent Reflection

WE RESPOND

"Loved by God, we rise to remember our baptism and to offer our offering and our prayers."

Symbolic Remembering Of Our Baptism At The Font

Beloved in Christ,
today we remember Jesus stepping into the Jordan,
not because he needed the water,
but because we did.
In baptism, God speaks a word over each of us:
"You are my Beloved."
Today, we return to that promise. *(Minister places a hand in the water.)*

Water is the beginning of creation,
the doorway to freedom,
the wellspring of life.
In these waters we were named,
in these waters we were claimed,
and in these waters we were sent into God's world
to live with courage, compassion, and joy. *(Minister lifts water or lets it fall gently back into the font.)*

As this water moves,
may it awaken your memory,
renew your spirit,
and remind you that no matter where your path has wandered,
God's love still flows toward you.

Invitation for the congregation:

You are invited, as you come forward,
to touch the water,
and say the words: "I belong."
remembering that you are God's beloved.

Offering and Thanksgiving

As Jesus stepped into the Jordan,
he offered himself fully to God's courageous work of love.
Today we offer our gifts, our resources, our commitments,
signs of our desire to join that sacred work.

**May what we give reflect our gratitude
and deepen our ministry of justice, compassion, and hope.**

(The offering is collected in the sanctuary. For those online, you are welcome to donate to the work of TSP with the QR code below.)



Offertory Hymn: MV 135 *Called by Earth and Sky* (vv.1-3)

Refrain

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

After last verse, repeat twice more;
called by earth and sky.

1 Precious these waters, endless seas,
 deep ocean's dream,
 waters of healing, rivers of rain,

the wash of love again. (R)

2 Precious this gift, the air we breathe;
 wind born and free.
 Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
 our gathering and our grace. (R)

3 Precious these mountains, ancient sands;
 vast fragile land.
 Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,
 Creation's faithful song. (R)

Offering Prayer

River of Life,
bless these gifts as you bless the waters of baptism.
May they flow toward healing,
move with compassion,
and ripple outward with generosity.
Use them, and us, to reveal your love in this world.
Amen.

Prayers of the People

Loving God, hear our prayer.
And in your love, answer.

Sung Response: MV 115 "Behold, behold, I make all things New"

**Behold, (behold,) behold, (behold,)
I make all things new,
beginning with you and starting from today.**

**Behold, (behold,) behold, (behold,)
I make all things new,
my promise is true,
for I am Christ the way.**

Encircling Prayers... *We hold in our prayers:*

The United Church of Canada

- The Rt. Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath, Moderator
- The Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary
- The General Council Executive

Ecumenical Prayer

The churches in Iran, Iraq and Syria

The pastors and congregations of Christ Disciples Church, India

*Christ has been revealed among us.
He who is God is here seated.
The voice of peace has sounded.
The command for the Holy greeting has been given.
The church has become one soul.
The kiss has been given as a full bond.
The adversity has been removed,
and love has been spread among us all.
Now, O you ministers, raising your voice,
give praise in unison,
to the united Godhead
to whom the Seraphim give praise.*

-From The Sacred Music and the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church

WE GO TO GOD'S WORLD

"We go to carry baptism's promise into the world God loves."

Closing Hymn: VU101 *Songs of Thankfulness and Praise* (vv.1-2, 4)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Songs of thankfulness and praise,
 Jesus Christ, to you we raise,
manifested by the star
 to the sages from afar;
branch of royal David's stem
 in your birth at Bethlehem;
anthems be to you addressed,
 God in flesh made manifest.</p> <p>2 Manifest at Jordan's stream,
 Prophet, Priest, and King supreme;
and at Cana wedding guest,
 in your Godhead manifest;</p> | <p>manifest in power divine,
 changing water into wine;
anthems be to you addressed,
 God in flesh made manifest.</p> <p>4 Grant us grace to see you, Lord,
 mirrored in your holy Word;
with your grace our lives endow,
 grace to imitate you now,
that we like to you may be
 at your great epiphany,
anthems be to you addressed,
 God in flesh made manifest.</p> |
|--|---|

Life and Works of the Community

Benediction

Postlude: *On Jordan's Stormy Banks* by M. Durham, arr. by Mark Hayes

The flowers this Sunday are donated in memory of Ella Taylor-Walsh from Don and Heather Beard.

TRINITY ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

FAITH JUSTICE ARTS



You can sign up to receive our E-newsletter by scanning the QR code above, or by emailing Sarah.

Upcoming Dates:

View the Church calendar by visiting www.trinitystpauls.ca/community/calendar/

January 2026

January 13: Church Board Meeting (6:30-9pm)
January 14: Wednesday Evening Reflection Group (7-8pm)
January 16: TSP Times Deadline
January 18: New Members Session (after service)
January 20: Deep Listening Session (2-4pm)
January 25: Holy Land Service
January 28: Out of the Cold Meal Prep (10am-12pm)

February 2026

February 1: Volunteer Fair
February 8: Book Talk - "On Dismantling Settler Colonialism" (after service)
February 15: TSP Treasures and Treats Winter Fundraiser (11:45-2pm)
February 16: AGM Reports Due
February 18: Ash Wednesday (7pm)

Volunteer Opportunities:

Sunday Greeter

Help create a warm welcome at TSP. This is a one-Sunday-per-month commitment (either the 1st or 3rd Sunday). Greeters show up at 10am to set up the welcome table, hand out bulletins, answer questions, and stay for conversation and coffee in the Narthex after the service and help with cleanup. Mentoring provided. Thank you for helping make TSP where all feel welcomed, affirmed, and valued! Please contact Alex Horksy (alexandra.horsky@yahoo.com) or Jim Lewis (tspjimlewis@gmail.com) to discuss.

Out of the Cold Sandwich Prep

TSP is responding to a request from St. Luke's United, one of our fellow downtown churches, to prepare 200 sandwiches once a month for their Out of the Cold meal program. We will meet in the Studio on the Wednesday mornings of January 28, Feb. 25 and March 25 at 10 am - noon (or starting at 9:30 if you can make it). We'd appreciate your assistance - either hands-on or providing a financial donation for groceries. Please contact either Janet Haddock (haddock.janet44@gmail.com) or Betsy Anderson (andersonbetsy528@gmail.com).

TSP Treasures and Treats Winter Fundraiser

Following your winter declutter, we are accepting new or near new, gently used items for our community fundraising market. We ask for the following items (Donated items should be clean, new or gently used):

- Small appliances and electronics; cooking/baking equipment
- pet supplies; gardening tools, plants; sports equipment
- collectables and vintage bargains; books; comic collections
- clothing, washed and in good condition; jewelry, handbags, backpacks, small valises

Please contact Gillian or Lina with a note of your items, approximate price. Item Drop-Off at TSP Begins February 8. Please note: any items that are not sold will be donated at the end of the event.

Looking to Volunteer? There are plenty of roles on various dates:

- January 24 & 25: Posting flyers in the Annex
- Week of February 8: Item receiving & pricing
- February 14 (TBD) & 15: Event set-up and tear-down
- February 15: Day-of sales, café support, and clean-up

Even an hour makes a difference and every purchase helps us reach our fundraising goal of \$2,500 for TSP! For more details, or to help with any of the above, please contact Lina Medaglia (+1 647-525-1011, Medaglia.miller@rogers.com) or Gillian Graham (647-550-6013, Gillian.graham@alumni.utoronto)

Church Events:

Church Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Church Board will be on Tuesday, January 13th at 6:30pm in the Memorial Room. Please advise Dan Main (tspdanmain@gmail.com) if you would like anything included on the agenda.

Wednesday Evening Reflection Group

The next Wednesday Evening Reflection Group gathering is on Jan. 14th from 7-8 pm on Zoom. See the E-newsletter for the link to join. Although our group has many regular attendees, we warmly welcome anyone who would like to join us in creating a conversational space that honours the sacred and our shared longing for growth, community, and healing. You are also welcome to come for an hour of quiet listening, if you wish.

Holy Land Service

Please attend (in person or on zoom) our joint annual Holy Land Service and Q and A, Jan.25, 2026 presented by the Middle East Working Group of Bathurst, Bloor St and Trinity-St Pauls United Churches. Guest speaker will be the Hon. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, MP for Beaches-East York. Zatoun products available. Loose offering to International Development and Relief Foundation (IDRF), Canada, Palestine Urgent Appeal.

New Member Session

If you have been worshipping with us in person or online and are sensing a desire to make Trinity-St. Paul's your spiritual home; we warmly invite you to join one of our upcoming New Member Sessions with our minister, Hewitt. We will meet in person on Sunday, January 18, after service from 11:45–1:15 pm. A follow-up time will also be arranged for you to meet with church leadership as part of our shared discernment. We look forward to welcoming you, hearing your story, and walking together in faith, justice, and community.

Deep Listening Session

As Trinity-St. Paul's begins a new chapter of ministry, you are warmly invited to join in a series of Deep Listening Sessions. These gatherings provide an opportunity to pause, share, and hear one another's stories as we reflect together on life, community, and the church. The next Deep Listening Session will take place on January 20th from 2-4pm, in Hewitt's office. All are welcome. Please confirm your attendance with the church office by emailing church-admin@trinitystpauls.ca.

Indigenous Rights Solidarity & Book Talk

On February 8th in the Studio after morning service, John Olthuis will lead a discussion about TSP's Indigenous Rights Solidarity Group (hopefully to recruit some YOUNGER MEMBERS) and (in response to requests from TSPers) make some comments about his recently published book *On Dismantling Settler Colonialism – An Insider's Perspective on Reconciliation WITH Indigenous Peoples*.

TSP Treasures and Treats Winter Fundraiser

Join us for TSP Treasures & Treats, a community fundraising market featuring thoughtfully curated pre-loved items, vintage finds, jewellery, home goods, and delightful treats - all in support of TSP. Browse unique treasures, enjoy finger foods and café-style treats, relax in our Café Corner, and soak up the atmosphere with music throughout the event. Sunday, February 15, 2026, 11:45 AM – 2:00 PM Location: TSP Gymnasium & Studio

TRINITY ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

FAITH JUSTICE ARTS



427 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON M5S 1X7 - (416) 922-8435 - www.trinitystpauls.ca

*Trinity–St. Paul's is an inclusive and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Canada. We seek to be a centre for faith, justice and the arts: **a centre for faith**, where the Gospel is lived and shared; **a centre for justice**, where voices are raised for peace and equity; **a centre for the arts**, where beauty, imagination, and creativity reveal God's presence.*

Minister: Hewitt T. Holmes (The Rev., Ph.D. Candidate)

hholmes@trinitystpauls.ca

Phone: (416) 922-8435 ext. 24

Music Director: Deborah Park

musicdirector@trinitystpauls.ca

Phone: (416) 922-8435 ext. 26

Communications and Administration Coordinator (Church Office): Sarah Redikopp church-admin@trinitystpauls.ca

Phone: (416) 922-8435 ext. 23

General Manager: Aaron Dawson

adawson@trinitystpauls.ca

Phone: (416) 922-8435 ext. 25

Chair of the Board: Lois Kunkel

tsploiskunkel@gmail.com

Secretary of the Board: Dan Main

tspdmain@gmail.com

Church Treasurer: Bob Savaria

bsavaria@sympatico.ca

Board of Trustees, Chair: David Craig

david@davidscraig.com

Building Management Board, Chair: Lorna Niebergall

lorna.niebergall@sympatico.ca

Finance Committee, Co-Chairs:

Del Doucette

doucette@furgielelaw.com

Deepak Ramachandran

deepak1.ramachandran@gmail.com

Ministry and Personnel, Co-Chairs:

David Fallis

davidfallis408@gmail.com

Jeanne Moffat

jeannemoffat@gmail.com

Nurturing Community, Chair: Alexandra Horsky

alexandra.horsky@yahoo.com

Pastoral Care, Co-Chairs:

Janet Mairs

ipmairs@outlook.com

Paula Nieuwstraten

tsppaulan@gmail.com

Public Witness, Chair: Janet Haddock

haddock.janet44@gmail.com

Stewardship, Co-Chairs:

Del Doucette

doucette@furgielelaw.com

Alexandra Horsky

alexandra.horsky@yahoo.com

Technical Support: James Mackey

jamesbb.mackey@gmail.com

Worship and Faith Formation, Co-Chairs:

Martin Pinckney

martin.pinckney@mail.utoronto.ca