

## Local Churches invite the community to help others celebrate

**By Marni Walsh**

As Christmas approaches, the sanctuaries of our local churches open wide to welcome the community and growing families, home for the holidays, with special services celebrating the season.

From cafes and Christmas dinners, to sacred services and pageants filled with happy children, it is an intimate time of love and gratitude.

But, it is also important to remember that there are many in our community for whom Christmas magnifies their troubles and loneliness.

"There are many people who find the season challenging in a myriad of ways," says Reverend Candice Bist of Trinity and Primrose United Churches.

She encourages people "to be gentle of spirit, and aware of the needs of those around them, and to see if there are simple ways to walk in companionship with others this Christmas, understanding, as we must, that we are all family, and that the well-being of one, is the wellbeing of the other."

One way to achieve this might be to have them join you at a local church event or service.

At Abiding Place Fellowship, Pastor Gord Horsley says the congregation is holding a Christmas cafe, this Sunday, Dec 18 at 10 a.m. in the Mel Lloyd Center, where they have church every Sunday.

"It is a talent show and finger food event where all the church members show their talent with songs, skits, poems and more," says Pastor Gord. "[It's] a time of fun and fellowship."

On Christmas Day, December 25, Abiding Place Fellowship will be holding a church service from 10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Abiding Place Fellowship is located in the auditorium of the Mel Lloyd Centre, entrance "C."

Call 519-925-3651 for more information.

At St. Paul's Anglican Church, Reverend Stephanie Pellow announces her congregation will be celebrating Christmas this year with a Children's Pageant on Sunday, December 18, during the regular morning service at 9:30 am.

On Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24, the Family Service will be at 4 p.m. and the Candlelight Service of Holy Communion and carols at 9:00 pm. Because Christmas is on a Sunday this year, St. Paul's is also holding a service at 9:30 am Christmas Day.

St. Paul's Anglican is located at 312 Owen Sound St, in Shelburne. For more information call 519-925-2251.

Rev. Bob McLellan leads Grace Church of the Nazarene in their Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m. on December 24.

There will be no service on Sunday, December 25. Grace Church of the Nazarene is located at 736 Steeles Street, Unit # 3, in Shelburne. For more information call 519-925-0560.

Bethel Bible Chapel will present their Sunday School Christmas Program on Sunday, December 18 beginning at 10:45 am with a potluck lunch to follow. Bethel Bible Chapel is located at 419 Main Street East in Shelburne. Call 519-925-3910 for more

information.

Shelburne and area United Churches, Trinity and Primrose, have several services welcoming the community as well. December 18th is the Primrose Christmas Service of Carols and Story at 7 pm. December 21st at 7pm, Trinity United Church will hold a Solstice Service, focusing on those who are 'Apprehensive about Christmas.' This 'blue' Christmas service marks the longest night of darkness in the year 'while celebrating the return of the light and the way of love that is at the heart of the Christmas celebration,' says Reverend Bist.

On December 24, Trinity Church will hold its Christmas Eve Family Service at 7 pm followed by a Christmas Eve Contemplative Candlelight Service at 9:30 pm with music at both services led by Musical Director Bruce Ley.

On December 25, there will be a Christmas Morning Service at 10 am at Trinity United Church. On January 1, a New Year Wonderment service will be held at Trinity United Church at 10 am.

Trinity United Church is located at 200 Owen Street in Shelburne. Primrose United Church is located at 486281 30th Side Road at the corner of Hwy 10 in Primrose. For Further Information call 519-925-2233.