



Trinity Topics

ADVENT / CHRISTMAS 2017

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“The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” –

Matthew 4:16

In ages past, before the marvels of central heating and electric lights, it was impossible to forget the encroaching cold and darkness of December. Imagine spending whole weeks huddled around a feeble fire in the darkness with the people you love, telling stories and waiting for the light to come. This is the setting for Christmas in the Northern Hemisphere. If a celebration in the miserable cold and darkness seems strange, think about what you did while the last blizzard was coming down. In Boston we would sit together in the warmth of the apartment all day eating cake and drinking coffee. Before the hassle of digging out, the ordinarily busy city sat in silence as people skied up and down Commonwealth Avenue. The very oldest tradition was to tell ghost stories on Christmas (What is Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, after all, but a ghost story?), which might seem yet more strange, but what better than a good fright to make you hug your family closer and appreciate the light a little more?

We Christians are not unique in finding a little light in the darkness of winter, but we do have our own themes in our winter celebration. The literal darkness of winter is reflected in the figurative darkness of the Christmas story. It begins with the themes of Advent. The injustice of empire in the chaos of the census, the economic uncertainty of a homeless family ready to have a child, the petty grasping of our rulers, the terror of the slaughter of the innocents, these are all realities that lurk in our newspapers to this day, these 2,000 years later. Christmas bring us to the bigger picture. In this darkness, the Lord who made heaven and earth is acting in mysterious ways. “Unto us a child is born!” So what? More children are born all the time, and this child is homeless no less. What irresponsible parents! “This child will be called ‘God with us.’” God is with us in a world that is so broken, so unfair, so second rate? “Indeed, God is with us, even unto the end of the age, Amen!”

Even in the literal and figurative darkness of our world, we still have each other, and now we have God with us too, who Himself is all light, warmth, and love. That is a very great reason to celebrate indeed. For at least a little while, we have a chance to forget our problems and remember the people we have been given. For at least a little while, our hearts can be open wide with generosity, gratitude and mercy for all. We can forget about the struggle of life for at least a day and remember the many blessings we have with a mighty feast, presents, and the old songs that make us feel better. There can be a day when war can cease and politics can be off the tv. This is the season to recall the world that God has imagined for us, and what his birth as a little baby in Bethlehem was meant to bring about.

Fr. Zachary Brooks +

Christmas Bazaar and Luncheon

December 1 and 2 will be busy days at Trinity! **Help is needed** in many ways in preparation for the weekend. Do you bake? Can you sort through donations? Can you work in the kitchen? Several days of work precede the bazaar and luncheon. Cashiers, clerks and servers are also needed. Your donation of goods, money and time will be appreciated. See the sign-up book on the table in the foyer or contact the Parish Office.

Luncheon: Kitchen workers are always needed. From 10 to 1 on Friday, workers will cut and prepare produce. Help is needed all day Saturday. If you can help serve at the luncheon, contact K-Lou Ashmore or the Parish Office. It really helps to have a clean-up crew to come in at the end of the luncheon.

Holiday Shoppe & Book Sale: Workers will be setting up the week ahead. If you have an extra hour to work, contact the Parish Office for times. Extra hands are always needed boxing up items after church on Sunday, December 3, and on Monday, December 4.

Gourmet Table: Your home-prepared baked and pantry items should be brought to church Thursday or Friday. See Janet Mitchell if you need suggestions.

Donations for Christmas Flowers

We appreciate your donations which pay for the Christmas flowers. Envelopes are on the table in the foyer. You may write the names of those in whose memory flowers are given and place your donation inside the envelope. Of course, you may also call the Parish Office, but we thought the special envelopes might make the process easier, and they make the recordkeeping much easier.

There are also a few regular Sundays throughout the year on which we do not have regular donors. Contact the Parish Office if you would like to donate Altar Flowers. We will keep a list.



News & Announcements

Outreach

ECW was pleased to donate nineteen shoeboxes plus \$175 cash to **Operation Christmas Child**, a ministry of the Samaritan's Purse. Thanks to all who contributed boxes and money toward the shipping of the boxes.

Due to the generosity of many, we are able to take several boxes of food to the Food Pantry as they partner with the Salvation Army to prepare Christmas baskets for the needy.

Please remember that the Vestry has designated that all of the **Special Offerings** (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Easter) is directed to Parish Outreach programs. Regular monetary contributions are made to the Salvation Army, the Jacksonville Food Bank, School District 117 Special Needs Students, Spirit of Faith Soup Kitchen, and New Directions Ministry.

The Church School will be sponsoring its **Advent Food Collection** on Sunday, December 17. You may bring items and leave them in the basket in the upper hallway.

The students will be making **Christmas cards** for shut-ins on Sunday, December 3. If you would like someone in particular to receive a card, please give the information to the Parish Office.

Thank you

The Vestry would like to thank the workers who reported to duty on Saturday, October 28, for clean up. They were able to work in several areas, both inside and out. What a wonderful difference their work has made!

Congratulations

Eliot Fanning Nelson, son of Francis & Audra, and grandson of Skip & Jo Ann, was born on October 27. Welcome to the world, Eliot!

Death

Richard Tavender died on November 13, 2017. He served Trinity Church in many ways, as a member of the Vestry and Choir. He was dedicated to his family, community, and church. (And we will always smile when we remember him as our Grillmeister!)

*May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace, and rise in glory.*

****If you have news you wish to share, please contact the Parish Office.***

Christmas Bazaar

Friday, December 1

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Saturday, December 2

10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Christmas Luncheon

Saturday, December 2

11:00 am & 12:30 pm

Vestry Meeting

Tuesday, December 12

7:00 pm

Church School

Advent Food Collection

Sunday, December 17

Please bring non-perishable food items.

Pledge / Contribution Statements

We always mail final annual statements after **December 31**; however, if you would like to know the status of your account as of now, please contact the Parish Office. Our updated software allows us to easily email a statement, and we can, of course, also send one by regular mail.

Looking ahead:

Annual Parish Meeting will be
on **Sunday, January 21.**

LITURGY FOR DECEMBER 2017

Sunday, December 3:

THE 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 6:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 10:

THE 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 13:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 17:

THE 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 20:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 21:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 24:

THE 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

The Eve of the Nativity

10:00 pm = Holy Eucharist

Monday, December 25:

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, December 26:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 27:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 28:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 31:

THE 1st Sunday after Christmas

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist