



Trinity Topics

DECEMBER 2018

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“For unto us a Child is born. Unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” —Isaiah 9:6

We arrive in December to once again hear and celebrate a story that we’ve heard so many times before. I hope neither the busyness of the season, nor our familiarity with the story can keep us from stopping, if only for a short time, to hear that story anew, to read it with fresh eyes and open minds. It’s a story that has something different to say to us every year because every year we hear it at a different point of our lives. The Word of God, as always, is alive for us, and it is never mere, static words on a page. The story of “Peace on earth, good will towards men” can be epic in scale, with God intervening in the affairs of human kind to challenge the injustice of violent kings and tyrannical empires. It is also ultimately intimate in scale, with a little baby born, in very difficult times indeed, to two hardworking, homeless parents who find great joy in having each other and in knowing the promises of God for them. What the story of Advent and Christmas means to you depends entirely on who you are.

The story of God becoming a human being in a little baby born in Bethlehem is one of new possibilities in a world that has really been quite settled in its ways for the whole of human history. Advent and Christmas are a time to put away cynicism and pessimism (and materialism and skepticism) about the world. Peace on earth is possible because of Jesus. Good will between all people across any border and boundary is possible because of this child. The men and women that we were created to be becomes possible with the grace of Advent and Christmas. Forgiveness becomes possible—for our own trespasses and for those trespasses against us which seem impossible for us to really forget. These things that all decent people long for become possible in the light of Jesus. They are available right now here at Trinity Church.

That is a bold claim to make, and let us never be ashamed to be bold in our cynical times to speak it in word and deed: peace on earth, good will towards men is available right now at Trinity Church. We already have what mighty superpowers and grand political projects have never been able to accomplish right here in a little church in Illinois. It’s given freely by Jesus in the preaching of the Word of God, in the Holy Sacraments, and even in our fellowship at coffee hour. It is present to anyone who reads the Bible and believes, and to those who do works of mercy for the poor in Jesus’ name. If the world could only have faith, we would already be beating our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks.

Our liturgical year begins in Advent, and now is the time to consider just what difference in our lives the arrival of Jesus, what theologians call the *Dogma of the Incarnation of God*, will make. When we really come to know who Jesus is, we will inevitably be changed, whether we are sinners, saints, or something in between. This is because Jesus is born for you, as an individual. Jesus was born for us, lived for us, died for us, and rose again from the dead for us. Every one of us must have our own relationship with Jesus, and I hope this year we can make that acquaintance anew. Along with this new acquaintance will be a new emphasis on personal holiness, for the Lord God chose us that we would bear the fruit of virtue. Advent and Christmas is a time for joy, and also charity, generosity, and kindness. Do not let these holy seasons pass you by without a little extra kindness!

The new heaven, new earth, and new heart promised to us in the Bible are available this Christmas. Come to Trinity Church and see it. May all of us have a blessed Advent and a very happy Christmas.

Fr. Zachary Brooks +

A Course in Anglican History: Part VII

As is often the case when powerful men marry their mistresses, the union between Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn was not a happy one. They married secretly in November of 1532, but by 1534 Henry was already trying to break it off. Henry unfairly put all the blame for the popular resentment for his actions on Anne, and he chafed at her Protestant relatives' attempts to influence him through her. Worst of all in Henry's eyes, she failed to produce a male heir—the whole reason Henry had sacrificed so much in the first place. By 1535 Henry was already smitten with another woman—Jane Seymour. When Anne miscarried a male child in 1536, her archrival at court, Thomas Cromwell, sprang her downfall. A manufactured plot involving adultery and incest was discovered, based entirely on testimony tortured out of Anne's acquaintance Mark Steamon. Archbishop Cranmer annulled the King's marriage to Anne on unstated grounds, and she was executed for treason five days later. Henry was married to Jane Seymour not two weeks later.

Meanwhile, Henry's move to close England's smaller monasteries, master minded by the same Thomas Cromwell, provoked overwhelming opposition from a nation already deeply resentful of his battle with the Church. Rumors spread far and wide of a new tax on baptisms. The royal pillaging of a monastery in the north of the country sparked a massive popular revolt called the Lincolnshire Rising, which quickly exploded into a genuine national crisis of 40,000 rebels led by disenfranchised monks and nuns: The Pilgrimage of Grace.

This column is the seventh in the monthly series on the history of Anglicanism and the Episcopal Church.

The Readings for the Sundays in December

	<i>Old Testament</i>	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>New Testament</i>	<i>Gospel</i>
December 2	Jeremiah 33:14-16	25:1-9	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-36
December 9	Baruch 5:1-9	Canticle 4	Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
December 16	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Canticle 9	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
December 23	Micah 5:2-5a	Canticle 3	Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-55
December 30	Isaiah 61:10—62:3	147	Galatians 3:23-25	John 1:1-18

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 twenty-one shoeboxes plus \$195 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 have been able to take several boxes of food to the **Food Pantry**.

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 9. 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 2. If you would like someone in particular to receive a card, please give the information to the Parish Office.

Members of Trinity Church will ring the **bells for the Salvation Army** on December 4. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the upper hallway.

Christmas Bazaar and Luncheon

November 30 and December 1 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 9 to noon 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 2, and on Monday, December 3.

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

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

Christmas Bazaar

Friday, November 30

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Saturday, December 1

10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Christmas Luncheon

Saturday, December 1

11:00 am & 12:30 pm

Trinity Fellowship

This year we are studying
the history of our own *Trinity Church!*

Tuesday, December 4

7:00 pm

Church School

Advent Food Collection

Sunday, December 9

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:

Bishop's Visit is January 6.

Annual Parish Meeting will be
on **Sunday, January 27.**

LITURGY FOR DECEMBER 2018

Sunday, December 2:

THE 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer

Wednesday, December 5:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 9:

THE 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer

Wednesday, December 12:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 16:

THE 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer

Wednesday, December 19:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Friday, December 21: St. Thomas

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 23:

THE 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer

Monday, December 24:

The Eve of the Nativity

10:00 pm = Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, December 25:

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 26: St. Stephen

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 27: St. John

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Friday, December 28: The Holy Innocents

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 30:

THE 1st Sunday after Christmas

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer