



# Trinity Topics

**April 2019**

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## **“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”—*Matthew 25:35***

Coming to any new church for the first time, especially when it belongs to an unfamiliar denomination, can be very intimidating. One feels perpetually on the spot, especially in small congregations, certain that everyone notices that you can't quite follow the unfamiliar rites of the congregation. Meeting a new group of new people is hard enough as it is, and Christian worship demands a certain intimacy that even extroverts can find difficult to attain with complete strangers. Finally, despite the expectations of most congregations, many newcomers report Coffee Hour is the most difficult phase of Christian worship of all. Imagine being a stranger in a roomful of happily chatting cliques, wondering if you have the impertinence to intrude on a table's conversation. Mindfulness in inviting and welcoming visitors is essential for the life of any parish, and with this mindfulness I hope we can continue to build on Trinity Church's virtue of hospitality.

There are many things that we can be mindful of to ensure that a visit to our congregation remains a positive experience. First, most people come to a new congregation because they were invited by a friend or family member. It's only natural that attending any gathering of people is more comfortable when you know someone who will be there. A friend can introduce you and help you along in the order of service. I should hope that all of us are gently inviting friends and family to Church—why should we keep the wonderful miracle of our worship a secret? So many people today are lonely and isolated and don't even know that they want a connection to Jesus and to his chosen community.

A truly welcoming parish is a place where it becomes possible for anyone to make a genuine connection with others. This principle is important to keep in mind with invited friends and surprise visitors alike—the goal is a genuine connection, not trying to “sell” visitors on membership in our congregation. Indeed, in a truly welcoming parish it won't be only the visitors make new connections. You will be making new connections as well. With that general principle in mind, the following are some practical tips on how we as individuals can work to make visits to our parish a positive experience.

A visitor's first impression happens before the service. Greet people you don't know beforehand and make sure they have what they need to fully participate in the service. Don't assume that people know what is going to happen, rather ask questions about their familiarity with the Episcopal tradition. If they do not have a bulletin, lend them yours. Ask if they know how to find hymns in the hymnal. If they have children, let them know that we have Sunday School downstairs and that their children will return after the offertory, though children are always welcome at our services, and we have activity bags for them near the side door. Tell them that all baptized Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion in our Church or come up for a blessing. As someone who wasn't raised in the Episcopal tradition, I can assure you that it helps hearing from an “insider” that it's perfectly fine to simply experience the flow of worship rather than knowing all the responses already. Invite them to fill out a visitor information card.

Many visitors will attend worship a few times before they feel comfortable enough to come to Coffee Hour, though it's nice to personally invite them. When visitors do attend Coffee Hour, make sure that you invite them to your table and include them in the conversation. While most people don't want to be put on the spot, I personally feel that the vast majority of Episcopal parishes err too far on the side of giving visitors space. I know real people who, when they visit parishes, will stand in the corner looking lost just to gauge how long it takes for anyone to greet and include them. Few things are worse than a visitor feeling forlorn in a corner while everyone visits with friends. Finally, and this is perhaps the most important advice of all, invite visitors to come again next week!

*Fr. Zach Brooks +*

### *A Course in Anglican History: Part XI*

From 1539 to 1543, King Henry VIII kept England safe by remaining balanced between Protestantism and Catholicism, always dangling before the great powers the prospect of finally committing to their side. It's the sort of gambit that is impossible to maintain for long, and in 1543, Henry cast his lot with the King of Spain in a new war against France and the Ottoman Empire. No moralist or satirist could possibly come up with a more ludicrous allegory for the futility of war than the dog's breakfast that ensued. No nation got anything it wanted, and it was a financial catastrophe for every nation involved. It left Henry desperate for money, which gave him a new fit of Protestantism. In his defense, all the other nations of Europe were busily spoiling their churches for cash themselves.

The souls of Purgatory paid this price. The dogma of Purgatory, which is not explicitly mentioned in the Bible, was condemned by Protestants. Purgatory followed from the belief that certain redeemed souls underwent punishment in the afterlife until they were worthy to enter heaven. If you knew your deceased loved one led a mediocre life, you prayed that God would have mercy on him, perhaps lessening his sentence. Since the Holy Eucharist was (and is now) offered for the whole Church, living and dead, having a priest perform Mass for your loved ones in purgatory was considered especially effective. But priests have to eat after all, so worried Catholics piously contributed to *Chantries*, which supported priests whose sole ministry was to perform masses for the dead. The dozens of disused side altars cluttering Medieval cathedrals today originally accommodated these continual masses.

By Henry's day England's chantries had grown to bursting with money and income generating lands. A wealthy noble might endow a chantry with enough income for masses to be said for his soul every day for eternity! Hundreds of "Mass Priests" lived indolent lives with no other obligation than saying a Mass a day for no living congregation at all. It was too appealing a plum for Henry to resist plucking. In 1545, Henry seized the massive funds held by England's chantries, collapsing another pillar of Medieval Catholic piety. To this day, no one can be ordained to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church without first lining up a position with a *living* congregation.

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

### ***Holy Week and Easter Services:***

Holy Week is the climax of the Christian year, culminating in the Paschal Triduum and Easter Sunday.

- Holy Week will begin with **Palm Sunday** on April 14. The 10 o'clock service on Palm Sunday will begin in the churchyard for the Procession of the Palms.
- The Paschal Triduum is one long, three-day service that begins on **Maundy Thursday**, April 18, at 7 pm. The service will include foot washing and a watch at the Altar of Repose until midnight.
- **Good Friday** on April 19, will be celebrated at 7 pm with the traditional "Creeping Towards the Cross" and the recitation of the Solemn Reproaches.
- **Holy Saturday**, on April 20, at noon, will be a simple, meditative service of prayer as we prepare for the Vigil.
- Finally, the **Great Vigil of Easter**, celebrating Jesus' resurrection from the dead, will be celebrated on April 20, at 7:30 pm. We will host our friends from St. Luke's, Springfield again this year. This solemn and beautiful service will include the lighting of the New Fire, the reading of the Prophecies, and Renewal of our Baptismal Vows.
- Of course, we will gather on April 21, at 10 am for a joyous Festal Eucharist for **Easter Day**.
- The Paschal Triduum ends at sunset on Easter Day.
- Please make time to attend these services and consider inviting friends and neighbors to experience our worship.

### News & Announcements

#### *The Heifer Project International*

Let us not forget what the HPI is:

Heifer International's mission is to work with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the earth. By giving families a hand-up, not just a hand-out, we empower them to turn lives of hunger and poverty into self-reliance and hope. With gifts of livestock and training, Heifer projects help families improve their nutrition and generate income in sustainable ways.

A local connection:

Some of our older parishioners and Jacksonville natives may remember George Norris. (After he died, his wife Louise married Dr. Bone.) His mother was a confirmed member of Trinity Church. Back in 1963, Mr. Norris, himself a farmer, spent his weekdays in Washington, D.C. working with Sargent Shriver promoting the ideals of The Heifer Project International.

#### *Church School*

The Children appreciate your support of HPI, their Lenten project. They have already raised \$747 from the lunch and game day.

- Please support the Bake Sale on **April 7**.
- Keep filling your mite boxes; they will be collected on **April 28**.
- Church School teachers will sponsor an Egg Hunt on **Easter** following the 10 o'clock service.
- Children will be singing **in May** when they wrap up the Heifer Project and have their annual pizza party.

Be sure to check out the posters in the parish hall that the children have made. Each child has chosen an animal or project, and the posters show how much money it will cost to support that animal or project. Last year Trinity Church sent \$2769.64 to Heifer Project International!

#### *Food Bank*

Our January collection of soup was fantastic! In the month of April, we will try to **MEAT the need!** (This is not a misspelling!) Coordinators of the Jacksonville Area Food Center say that canned chicken is one of the most needed items. With our meat collection we will welcome canned chicken, ham, SPAM, etc. If you are able, please bring cans to the containers in the upper hallway during the month of April.

#### *Special Offerings*

The Ash Wednesday offering was \$541. Please remember that all of the special offerings go to the Outreach programs of Trinity Church. There will also be special offerings received on Good Friday and on Easter Sunday.

#### *Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches*

The Shoeman Water Projects collection was fantastic. We delivered 65 pairs of shoes in the name of Trinity Church. Thank you to all who contributed.

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

**Mothering Sunday – March 31**

The men and boys will serve the women and girls breakfast at **9 o'clock**.

We will also receive the spring United Thank Offering.

**Trinity Fellowship  
Tuesday, April 2, 7 pm**

We are studying the history of Trinity Church

**Sunday, April 7**

**Bake Sale**

**After the 10 o'clock service**

(to support the Church School's Lenten Project –  
*Heifer Project International*)

**ECW**

Build your own salad. Bring a salad ingredient. Lettuce and beverages are provided.

**Monday, April 8  
5:30 – 7:00 pm**

**Vestry Meeting**

**Tuesday, April 16**

**7:00 pm**



The Parish Office is accepting donations for the Easter flowers.

Envelopes are on the table in the lobby.  
Please use the envelopes.

**SERVICES IN APRIL 2019**

**Wednesday, April 3:**

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

**Sunday, April 7**

**FIFTH SUNDAY in LENT**

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer

**Wednesday, April 10:**

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

**Sunday, April 14**

**PALM SUNDAY**

8:00 am = The Proper Liturgy & Eucharist

10:00 am = The Proper Liturgy & Eucharist

**Wednesday in Holy Week, April 17**

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Maundy Thursday, April 18**

7:00 p.m. Proper Liturgy for Maundy Thursday

**Good Friday, April 19**

7:00 p.m. Proper Liturgy for Good Friday

**Holy Saturday, April 20**

**Easter Eve**

12 noon - Proper Liturgy for Holy Saturday

7:30 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter

**Sunday, April 21**

**EASTER SUNDAY**

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer

**Wednesday, April 24:**

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

**Sunday, April 28**

**SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER**

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

4:00 pm = Evening Prayer

***Morning Prayer is said at 10 o'clock  
on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.***