



Trinity Topics

January 2021

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“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

- Luke 2:13-14

Charles Dickens (for all his insight and wit) was not an apostle; his book *A Christmas Carol* has yet to be entered into the Christian canon of scripture, so I have never been able to preach about my favorite passage from it. Yet, I can commend this passage to you in a newsletter column. We all surely know the story. Ebenezer Scrooge, the unhappy miser of a protagonist, meets his long dead business partner Jacob Marley on Christmas Eve and is surprised to find his friend doomed to an unhappy afterlife despite his success in business:

“But you were always a good man of business, Jacob,” faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself. “Business!” cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. “Mankind was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The deals of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!”

Christmas can be a time of stress and consumerism, and isn't there enough stress and consumerism in life already? Do we really need more cookies and material possessions in our lives? Perhaps we need the reminder of the “reason for the season” from Scrooge's three ghostly visitors. Charles Dickens had a deep sense that Christmas was more than an occasion for materialism and sentimentality (or “humbug” as Scrooge would say). It is a chance to set aside our trade and worldly business to rejoice together for all too short a time. It is supposed to be a great interruption in life because the day-to-day grind can distract us from our true purpose in living. Christmas is a breath of cold air that brings us to our senses. This coming together as families and communities to celebrate the birth of Jesus changes our relationships with the people around us. As we know that God has become the Father of us all in Jesus, we see the people around us (even strangers) as brothers and sisters.

Alas, this interruption of the deals of our trade cannot last forever. Hopefully, this Christmas has refreshed us for our true business: charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence. In this year that is to come, we have a chance to put the meaning of Christmas into action in our lives. How are you going to make mankind your business? Make a “business plan” right now! Like all resolutions, our plans for 2021 need to be specific and concrete. It's probably not quite enough to simply say “I will be nicer this year!” What are you actually going to do that is more charitable, more merciful, or more benevolent? Will you give more to charity? How much will you give? Will you volunteer? Where, and how often?

Finally, something a modern reader of *A Christmas Carol* might miss is Dickens' biting social commentary. Scrooge's sneering comment that the prisons and workhouses are rather more than the poor need or deserve was official government policy at the time, which operated on the belief that the poor needed to be made as miserable as possible to encourage them to work harder. To describe the needy as “surplus population” was not an uncommon sentiment with the establishment. Bob Cratchit's stated pay of 15 shillings a week was a normal wage for a clerk, and Dickens quite realistically depicts the lifestyle this ordinary wage would support. Christmas is a reminder that we here at Trinity Church have a chance to change our whole community for the better. This action begins with you. What needs in the city of Jacksonville can we at Trinity Church possibly address? Let a member of Vestry know and we might make a plan for getting involved.

This mission will keep us busy enough in the year to come. God grant a very merry Christmas, and a blessed New Year to all of us!

Fr. Zachary Brooks

Special Offerings

The Thanksgiving Offering was \$225;
the Christmas Offering was \$380.
Please remember that all money
from special offerings goes to **Outreach**.

Doorbell Dinners

Trinity Church will be delivering Doorbell
Dinners the week of January 18-22.
Please contact K-Lou Ashmore (243-4309)
if you can help.

Pledge / Contribution Statements

Are enclosed with this mailing.
Thank you for your donations
during this challenging year.

Bishop Daniel Martins
will celebrate the Holy Eucharist
here at Trinity Church
on **January 17**.

Vestry Meeting Tuesday, January 19

(Since we are unable to hold our Annual Parish Meeting,
all current Vestry Members has agreed to stay in their
positions until the next Parish Meeting can be held.)

Blanket Sunday

is normally the last Sunday in January.
Donations for Church World Service
will be accepted this year by mailing your
check to the Parish Office.

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

SUNDAYS IN JANUARY 2021

*The Sunday 10 o'clock service with limited
attendance is our only service.*

*It is also live streamed on Facebook.
Attendees must follow the Reopening Guidelines.*

January 3:

The 2nd Sunday after Christmas Day

January 10:

**The 1st Sunday after The Epiphany:
The Baptism of Our Lord**

January 17:

The 2nd Sunday after The Epiphany

January 24:

The 3rd Sunday after The Epiphany

January 31:

The 4th Sunday after The Epiphany

HOLY DAYS

*The following will be celebrated with a
10 o'clock Eucharist
in the Lady Chapel.*

Friday, January 1:

**The Holy Name
of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

Wednesday, January 6:

**The Epiphany
of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

Monday, January 18:

The Confession of St. Peter

Monday, January 25:

The Conversion of St. Paul