



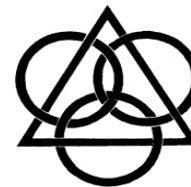
Trinity Topics

January 2022

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“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captive, and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”—Luke 4:18-19A

Merry Christmas, and a happy New Year! We offer thanksgiving to God for the year that has come and gone, and we have before us the prospect of a fresh, new year. Why not start off this new year with some happy news? As I write this the FDA is in the process of approving a highly effective treatment for COVID-19 called Paxlovid which will greatly reduce the number of hospitalizations and death resulting from the disease. Home testing kits, which produce results in minutes, are becoming available, so we won’t have to rush to the doctor every time we get a mere sniffle. This is the end of the inexorable tunnel for this pandemic! I am sure I am not alone in being sick to death of wearing masks and remaining imprisoned in isolation after the slightest sniffle. We finally can reasonably hope for the return of normal life in the coming year.

It is time, therefore, to begin coming out of our pandemic isolation. I remember when we first shut our doors during the beginning of the pandemic and how afraid all of us were. It was perhaps for the best, because it provided our society critical time to prepare for the inevitable spread of COVID-19. While it’s true that we are not out of the woods yet, our community has developed habits that ensure safe participation in public worship since the initial phase of the pandemic. As tiresome as masks, sign-in sheets, and social distancing can be, they are a small price to pay for the opportunity to encounter Jesus Christ on Sunday in the preaching of the Word, the celebration of the sacraments, and the fellowship of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Christians across the world and throughout history have endured far more to attend church than an itchy mask!

It is all the more critical that children have access to religious instruction and formation in Christian life even during the pandemic. Just like we would hardly imagine letting our children go without an education in a pandemic, we must be equally certain to bring them to church during these times. Regular participation in church during childhood is by far the biggest factor in helping children grow up to share our Christian faith. Our Sunday School teachers have prioritized the safety of children and have established ways to limit their exposure to COVID-19 when they attend church.

All of that said, we are not out of the pandemic yet. The end of the delta variant wave meets the rise of the omicron variant wave. Hospitals continue to be strained by the high number of serious covid cases, largely due to the large number of people who have been unwilling to be vaccinated. The laxness in precautions that has resulted from our pandemic exhaustion has given COVID-19 new opportunities to spread. Research is coming to find that natural immunity resulting from recovery from COVID-19 offers incomplete protection from future cases. Even as we emerge from our long isolation, it’s important to take the precautions available to us, not only for our own safety but also for the safety of those around us who might be immunocompromised. This is not to discourage participation in the public worship of our church—following our pandemic precautions will ensure that we can all gather safely as a community. The advice remains the same: get vaccinated, wear a mask indoors, observe social distancing. The more we let these rules slide, the longer this pandemic will go on!

As always, we must keep in mind that this pandemic will not go on forever. We will have forgotten all about the age of masks and social distancing soon enough. Start planning for the end of it all today by getting back into spiritually healthy patterns of life.

Fr. Zachary Brooks

A Course in Anglican History: Part XXXV

At the beginning of the reign of Charles I, it's a good idea to pause and review the theological parties active in England at the time. There were Catholics who practiced their faith secretly, called Recusants. For them, Christian life was a matter of God's love for us, and our active response in acts of charity and piety. The Church of England prided itself in being Reformed. Reformed Christianity, often called Calvinism, taught that salvation was not a matter of what we could do, but about what God had already done for us in the life of Jesus. Rather than faith being a matter of praying enough, going to enough masses, or giving enough to the Church, God had predestined us to have faith in him, and that left to us gratitude and joy. What this meant for Church practice was a matter of passionate debate. The Church of England was divided into High Church and Low Church parties. The High Church party taught that the Church should embrace practices that were worthy of Christian life, even if they weren't mentioned in the Bible. The Bible doesn't say what posture you should receive Communion in, though they thought kneeling showed suitable reverence for the grace of God. The Bible doesn't say what clothes a pastor should wear in church, but a flowing, white surplice is beautiful, dignified, and traditional. The Low Church party believed that these things not mentioned in the Bible were Catholic holdovers that should be purged from England. The Puritans believed they should remain members of the Church of England and work to purify the Church of these non-Biblical practices. Nonconformists (such as the Pilgrim Fathers that founded the state of Massachusetts), refused to have any part of a corrupt Church and founded their own congregations. Finally, new to the scene, was Arminianism, which responded to Calvinism with the idea that we can freely choose to respond to the grace of God in our lives. Reformed Protestants saw the similarity of that idea to the Catholicism of the Recusants and were enraged that Charles I started appointing Arminian leaders in the Church.

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

Annual Parish Meeting

Please make every effort to attend our Parish Meeting, on Sunday, January 23. It gives us an opportunity to review all the activities of our parish during 2021.

We will also elect up to four new Vestry Members and two Synod & Deanery Delegates. These persons must be confirmed Communicants in Good Standing, at least eighteen years of age.

Parish Meeting Reports

It is essential that we have written reports turned into the Parish Office by Wednesday, **January 19**. Although brief oral comments are welcomed at the meeting, the printed reports are attached to the minutes and filed for posterity. Without written reports, our history does not reflect an accurate picture of the life and times of Trinity Church.



News & Announcements

Bishop Search Update

The Very Rev. Brian K. Burgess was elected, on the second ballot, to be the next Bishop of Springfield on December 11. Rev. Burgess is currently the Rector of Christ Church in Woodbury, New Jersey and has had many leadership roles in the Diocese of New Jersey. He has previously served in Florida and Louisiana. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Music from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, and his Master of Divinity from Sewanee – The University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. After his election, the next step is to get consents from the majority of bishops and dioceses in the national Church. Stay tuned for details about his consecration next May. Thank you to John Clancy, Forrest Keaton and Alice Tracey for representing our parish in this process!

Outreach

Our Outreach Chairman Abby Radcliffe coordinated two initiatives during Advent. Parish members generously donated toward the food collection. On her first trip to the center, she had over 170 pounds of food. And then she made a second trip. She also organized groups of members to ring the bells for the Salvation Army. Thank you, Abby, and thanks to all who donated goods and their time.

Doorbell Dinners

Trinity Church will be delivering Doorbell Dinners the week of January 17-21. Please contact K-Lou Ashmore at Klouless@msn.com, or phone at 217-243-4309 or 217-473-1864, if you can help.

Special Offerings

The Thanksgiving Offering was \$315; the Christmas Offering was \$460. Please remember that all money from special offerings goes to **Outreach**.

Coffee Hour

There will be a sign next to the kitchen serving counter so that members can sign up to host a simple coffee hour after the Sunday 10 o'clock service. We still observe social distancing in the parish hall. Snacks that are offered are prepackaged or pre-plated. It is good for us to enjoy some safe fellowship in these days.



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

Lectors:

January 2: Cathy Nelson
January 9: Forrest Keaton
January 16: Alice Tracey
January 23: Paula Woods
January 30: Forrest Keaton

Acolytes:

January 2: Bruce Evans
January 9: Clayton Robb
January 16: Bruce Evans
January 23: Clayton Robb
January 30: Bruce Evans

Ushers:

January 2: Chuck Crim
January 9: Volunteer
January 16: Chuck Crim
January 23: Bob Hardwick
January 30: Volunteer

ECW Supper Meeting

Thursday, January 13
5:30 pm

Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday, January 23
11:30 am

Vestry Meeting

Tuesday, January 25
7:00 pm

Blanket Sunday

To benefit Church World Service
January 30

Pledge / Contribution Statements
will be mailed the first week of January.

LITURGY FOR JANUARY 2022

Saturday, January 1:

THE HOLY NAME

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, January 2:

The 2nd Sunday of Christmas:

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, January 5:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Thursday, January 6:

EPIPHANY:

6:00 pm = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, January 9:

EPIPHANY I

The Baptism of our Lord

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, January 12:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, January 16:

EPIPHANY II

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, January 18:

The Confession of St. Peter

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, January 19:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, January 23:

EPIPHANY III

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, January 25:

The Conversion of St. Paul

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, January 26:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Sunday, January 30:

EPIPHANY IV

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist