



Trinity Topics

DECEMBER 2023

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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**

A couple days ago my son asked for a little money to put into the red bucket in front of the supermarket. You don't really need to argue children into believing that it is better to give than to receive. I remember exactly how they feel from when I was a child. Though today I may have more worries about money than I did as a child, the holiday season is an annual reminder of the thrill of charity. I am sure I am not alone in this—every Advent and Christmas season charitable giving skyrockets as the hearts of all grow generous and glad. During the holidays we all feel freedom to believe in the power of kindness and hope. This is wonderful, and it's exactly what we hope can be carried into the rest of the year. We can hardly buy presents for each other and cook feasts all year, but there is not one reason we cannot live the entire year with a spirit of glad generosity for all. There is not one reason we cannot hope for peace on earth, good will towards men.

Generosity makes us glad because it is most faithful to what our life is. Life is the gift of God's love toward us. Our anxieties and stress in day-to-day life must be silent before this saving truth because that life is founded in the steadfast promises of God, who will never let us down. In all this we see the importance of faith for living our lives to their fullest. Our knowledge of God opens new possibilities for life. I think the secular world actually knows this quite well without realizing it, as its vigorous celebration of Advent and Christmas shows. What the world knows implicitly, we Christians know explicitly; our lives begin with the gift of God's love for us in the life of Jesus Christ, and, therefore, we are most alive when we give to others.

The story of God becoming a human being in a little baby born in Bethlehem is one of hope for a new world. 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 become 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 to all who believe in this Gospel, and this is why I have hope for our future as a community.

Soon enough the world will return to business as usual. It will fall to Trinity Church on December 26 to keep the light of Advent and Christmas alive throughout the year. May God bless us all in these holy seasons.

Fr. Zachary Brooks +

A Course in Anglican History: Part LVII

One of the defining features of Church life in the American colonies during the early 18th century was a Puritanical sense of exclusivity among congregations. The Puritans left England in the first place because they believed the Church of England had become corrupted by its lax standards, and they came to the New World as a chance to restore the pure Church of the Bible. The colonies legally enforced frequent church attendance for all, and of course all had to contribute to the Church's finances, but becoming a member had a very high bar. Individuals had to testify to their knowledge of scripture and holiness of life before the Church elders. They were admitted into membership only if the elders agreed they were among the Elect. Membership brought with it the right to have one's children baptized, admission to Holy Communion, and (if male) the right to vote in Church elections and hold offices in the Church. In most congregations non-members outnumbered members by four to one. This exclusivity spread to all denominations in the colonies, including Anglicanism, though terminology might differ from sect to sect. While baptism was open to all in Anglican parishes, most rights of congregational life were limited to people whom the priest admitted to Holy Communion, usually a small portion of his congregation. This exclusivity drove the profusion of the sects available in the colonies, since one spurned by one denomination could look for membership in another. This system was also obviously susceptible to corruption, with elders and rectors being highly motivated to see the virtue of wealthy and politically connected individuals. Many congregations were deeply reluctant to accept minorities as members. This engendered divisions of American denominations according to political, social, and racial lines that Churches still struggle to overcome today.

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

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.

Advent Confession and Absolution

Advent is traditionally a time for Christians to make their confessions to a priest in preparation for the celebration of Christmas. Confession has been part of Anglican life since the Protestant Reformation. It is a chance to lay down the burdens on one's conscience and receive the freedom of believing in Jesus. Fr. Zach is available to hear confessions in the parish office 8am to Noon, Tuesday through Friday, or by appointment.

☩ Come, ☩ Come, Emmanuel!

News & Announcements

Outreach

- ECW was pleased to donate eight shoeboxes plus \$80 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.
- We have been ringing bells at Hy-Vee for the Salvation Army this year.
- 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.
- Outreach Chairman Laura Evans is coordinating the "Adopt a Family" program for Christmas through the Salvation Army. She will post specific information on the bulletin board, and you can contact her directly at levans84.le@gmail.com.

Christmas Luncheon

Kitchen workers are always needed. From 9 to noon on Friday, workers will cut and prepare produce. Help is needed all day Saturday. Workers are needed both in the kitchen and in the dining room. If you can help as a server at the luncheon, contact the Parish Office. It really helps to have a clean-up crew to come in at the end of the luncheon.

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.

Death

Bob Underbrink died on November 26, 2023. The service for him will be on Friday, December 1, at 10:30 am, at Buchanan Cody Funeral Home.

*May his soul and the souls
of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.*

Congratulations!

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association recognized Abby Radcliffe with the Rural Health Hero Award from the National Center for Rural Health Professions. She was recognized for the "unwavering dedication to Advancing the Health Workforce in Rural Illinois." Congratulations, Abby! We are proud of you.

Fr. Zach baptized Adelle & Brooke, the twin daughters of Mollie Herget and James Schnitker. The proud grandparents Jim & Paula, relatives, and friends celebrated with them on November 25.



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

Christmas Luncheon
Saturday, December 2
11:00 am & 12:30 pm
or Carryout

Trinity Fellowship
Tuesday, December 5, 7 pm
In the Footsteps of Jesus
ECW Salad Supper
Monday, December 18, 5:30 pm

Lectors

| | |
|--------|---------------------|
| 3 | Alice Tracey |
| 10 | Nancy Taylor Porter |
| 17 | Forrest Keaton |
| 24 | Volunteer |
| 24 Eve | Forrest Keaton |
| 25 | Alice Tracey |
| 31 | Paula Woods |

Acolytes:

| | |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| 3 | Bruce Evans, Clayton Robb |
| 10 | Bruce Evans, Clayton Robb |
| 17 | Clayton Robb |
| 24 | Bruce Evans, Clayton Robb |
| 24 Eve | Bruce, Clayton, Ethan, Cail |
| 25 | Volunteer |
| 31 | Bruce Evans, Clayton Robb |

Ushers

| | |
|--------|----------------------------|
| 3 | Chuck Crim, Volunteer |
| 10 | Bob Hardwick, Jim Herget |
| 17 | John Clancy, Volunteer |
| 24 | Jim Herget, Volunteer |
| 24 Eve | Chuck Crim, Jeff Radcliffe |
| 25 | Volunteer |
| 31 | Chuck Crim, John Clancy |

Looking ahead:

Annual Parish Meeting will be
on **Sunday, January 28.**

LITURGY FOR DECEMBER 2023

Sunday, December 3:
THE 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 7:
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 14:
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: St. Thomas
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: St. Stephen
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 27: St. John
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 28:
The Holy Innocents
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

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