



The Abbeville Anglican



The Newsletter of Historic Trinity Church

Volume 17

DECEMBER 2023

Number 12

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the parish is scheduled for December 3, 2023 and will take place immediately following the Mass. At this time, members will elect new members to the 2024 vestry, hear reports on the State of the Mission from wardens, Parish Administrator and Treasurer. Members will also elect new delegates and alternates to the 102nd Diocesan Convention to be held at Trinity Cathedral in November 2024. If you have an issue that you wish to be addressed at the annual meeting, please advise the Senior Warden in advance.

Advent

Advent is the first season of the Church year and begins this year on the first Sunday in December (3rd) and will continue until Christmas Eve. The name is derived from the Latin *adventus* (coming). The season is a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus and the expectation of his return “in power and in Glory.” Most priests consider Advent to be a mini penitential season, though not so austere as Lent. Only greens are allowed on the altars and the Mass of preference is usually the ancient Rite One Eucharist, dating to the 16th century, and celebrated in much of the original Elizabethan English and stirring in its beauty. Advent is a favorite time of year for most Episcopalians as it brings us into the beauties and joys of Christmas. Please help our many visitors to understand that unlike most of the other Christian denominations, Advent and Christmas are two distinctly different seasons in the Episcopal Church. Christmas does not begin until Christmas Eve. Although our greens (garlands, trees, wreaths and other greenery) have lights, they may not be illuminated until Christmas Eve; no red bows, flowers; and no Christmas carols until Christmas Eve. Invite your friends to join you at Saturday Afternoons at Trinity for seasonal programs.

The Advent Wreath

The Advent Wreath appears on the first Sunday in Advent and an additional candle is lit on each Sunday of the season. The circular wreath and the greens are symbolic of the eternal nature of God and that He is always with us. The purple candles symbolize the faithful recognition of the coming of the Savior and the rose candle symbolizes joy and hope. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday of Advent which is called *Gaudete* from the Latin word for rejoice. The Christ candle is the white candle in the middle of the wreath and is lit on Christmas Eve.

WE WISH YOU A JOYOUS
CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY
NEW YEAR!

... some say that ever gainst that season comes wherein our Savior's birth is celebrated, the bird of dawning singeth all night long. And then, they say, no spirits dare to stir abroad. The nights are wholesome. Then no planets strike, no fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm. So hallowed and so gracious is the time. Hamlet, Act I, Scene 1.

The Midnight Mass

In every major poll which has been taken in the Church of England and in the American Church and Anglicans were asked: “What is your favorite service in the church year?” the majority questioned have always answered: “the Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.” If you think you might enjoy the experience of entering a beautiful church in shimmering candlelight, with the exotic aromas of incense and Russian Tea, to hear a Mass that is almost a thousand years old and containing much of the original Elizabethan English—then Trinity will be place for you at 11:00 pm on Christmas Eve. Please join us and bring your friends. Many people when they reach the conclusion of the Mass and are kneeling, holding their candle and singing Silent Night, have tears in their eyes and thanksgiving in their hearts for

that baby whose birth they are celebrating who went on the become their Redeemer and the Savior of their souls. Alleluia and Amen.

Diocesan Convention

The 101st Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina sat at Christ Church (Greenville) on November 10th and 11th. The preliminaries of the convention were done on Friday evening, followed by an elegant dinner in one of the beautiful dining rooms at Christ Church. An unexpected highlight of the convention was the presence of the 7th Bishop, the Right Reverend Dorsey Henderson, a much-loved and enormously popular Bishop who is remembered for his beautiful celebrations of the Holy Eucharist. On Saturday, the convention moved on efficiently to complete its agenda of elections, resolutions and the important Statement of Mission (the 2024 budget). The procedures of the convention have been highly streamlined and voting is now done exclusively on one's own cell phone. Luckily, Mike was one of our delegates, is up-to-date on all this computer stuff and could keep us old folks on the right track. Thank you, Mike! If you would like to represent Trinity at a future Diocesan Convention, see the Senior Warden.

Notes on the Advent and Christmas Seasons:

Advent begins of the first day of the new Christian year, The *Gloria in Excelsis* is not sung when the altar color is violet. The Seasonal Blessing for Advent is found on page 8 of the BOS. The readings for weekdays are found on pages 20-24 of LFF, 2006 Edition. Notes on the Advent wreath are found on page 18 of the BOS. The color for Advent Season may be violet or blue indigo. An order for an Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols is found in the BOS, page 20. The Seasonal Blessing for Christmas is found in the BOS on page 23. Weekday Mass readings are found in LFF, pages 25 and 26. The Christmas Season extends from Vespers I of the Nativity until the Baptism of Our Lord, 13 January, or 2 February. Various traditions collide during the Christmas/Epiphany Seasons. Do the best you can. Good Luck!

Feast Days in December:

Saint Thomas

On December 21st we celebrate the Feast of Saint Thomas the Apostle. Thomas was called a "doubting Thomas" or Didymus (meaning twin as does Thomas in the Aramaic). He is best remembered for doubting the Resurrection of Jesus when first told of it, and then proclaiming "my Lord and my God" when seeing and touching the Savior (John 20:28). Saint Thomas was perhaps the only Apostle who went outside the Roman Empire to preach the Gospel. It is also believed he crossed the largest area, which includes the Parthian Empire and India. Saint Thomas preached extensively in India and established many churches there. Tradition holds that he was martyred in India (killed by a spear) and that his remains were buried in Edessa. Perhaps the most interesting legend concerning Saint Thomas (but unsubstantiated) reported by Saint John Chrysostom (Bishop of Constantinople) that after the Resurrection of Christ, Saint Thomas was preaching in Persia where he met and baptized the same Magi who had brought gifts to Jesus after his birth. It is further reported that the Magi became associated with Saint Thomas and did much to advance the Christian Faith.

Lord Jesus Christ, let our prayer today be that of Saint Thomas, that upon seeing you truly present in our midst in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, we may proclaim in our hearts and on our lips, My Lord and My God, Amen.

Saint Stephen

We celebrate the *Feast of Saint Stephen, Deacon and Martyr* on December 26th. Saint Stephen's name is derived from the Greek, *stephanos*, meaning crown. Saint Stephen was the first martyr in the New Testament and set the pattern for suffering in Christ. He is particularly remembered as one of the seven deacons appointed by the Apostles to appease the widows among Greek Christians of the Church in Jerusalem. Jealous of St. Stephen's success in his ministry, important Jewish authorities plotted against him. Finally they try torture, but still the saint attempts to convert them; and at the end of his life, he prays for them as they stone him to death.

Saint John the Devine

On December 27th we celebrate the *Feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist*. Saint John, who is styled the beloved disciple of Christ, and is called by the Greeks, the Devine, was a Galilean, and the younger

brother of Saint James the Great, with whom he was brought up in the trade of a fisherman. Saint John was especially proficient in proclaiming aloud the most sublime mysteries of the divinity of Christ. He was the youngest of the Apostles, probably about 25-years-old when he answered Jesus' call and he continued to preach the gospel many years after the Lord's Ascension. Many writers have referred to Saint John as Jesus' favorite Apostle. With the Apostles Peter and James, John was a witness to the Transfiguration. Saint John stayed with Jesus through many of his trials and troubles and attended him at the crucifixion, standing near the cross, owning him in the midst of danger and tribulation. In his dying words, Jesus committed to John the care of the Blessed Mother. The beloved disciple, though full of grief, yet left not the cross and saw Jesus' side opened with a spear and the blood and water issue from the wound of which he bore record. It is believed that he was still present at the taking down of the Lord's body from the cross and helped present it into the waiting arms of the Holy Mother. The writings of Saint John are some of the most profound and remarkable in the Holy Scriptures, none more so than his *Revelation*, which was given to him by the Holy Spirit while he was in exile on the Isle of Patmos. Although several attempts were made to kill Saint John, Jesus sustained him and he was the only one of the Apostles to die peacefully in his bed of old age. It is possible that during the course of his long life, that he placed bishops in all the churches of Asia. While the Apostles lived they supplied the churches with bishops of their own appointing through the guidance of the Holy Spirit by virtue of their commission to plant the Church.

The Holy Innocents

On December 28th, we celebrate the *Feast of the Holy Innocents*. The massacre of the innocents is the Biblical narrative of infanticide by Herod the Great, the appointed king by the Romans. According to the Gospel of Matthew, Herod ordered the execution of male infants in Bethlehem so as to avoid the loss of his throne to a newborn king of the Jews whose birth had been related to him by the Magi. In typical Matthew style, it is understood as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy: Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the Prophet, saying a voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted,

because they are no more. (Matthew 2:28). The number of infants killed is not stated, however, the Holy Innocents have been claimed as the first Christian martyrs. The Magi did not return to Herod and avoided any further contact with him after having seen Jesus.

Bells and Smells

The Episcopal Church is famous for its "bells and smells" that add so much to the richness and mystery of its Liturgy. Following is a brief explanation of what some of the ritual acts mean that you will see as a part of the Christmas Eve High Mass:

The *Asperges* is the name given to the ancient rite of sprinkling the congregation with Holy Water (7th verse, Psalm 51, Latin translation of the Vulgate). This ceremony was retained in the English Church when it was removed from the Roman Church and has been in use at least from the 10th Century. One of the most important purposes of the *Asperges* is to remind us of our Baptism. The priest will receive the Holy Water from the acolyte and proceed to sprinkle the faithful with the Holy Water using a branch of Rosemary or some combination of fragrant herbs (*Arbor Vitae*). In the Episcopal Church we do not do what we do just because it is old, but much more importantly, because it helps to proclaim the Gospel in this time and place. Think about what this ceremony means when you receive the Holy Water at the Eucharist. At Trinity you will see the *Asperges* only at the high Easter and Christmas Masses and at the visitation of a bishop.

Incense has been used in religious services from the time of the Greeks, the Egyptians and the Romans. The incense we use at Trinity contains both frankincense and myrrh which were two of the gifts brought to Jesus from the Magi. The ascending clouds of incense as described in the Old Testament were an offering of earth's treasures to their creator, symbolizing prayer. Incense in the Church represents adoration paid to the Holy and Blessed Trinity. It also represents the grace God pours into our souls as the incense rises to Heaven and imparts fragrance throughout the church. The incense we use at Trinity is non-allergenic, however, if you suffer from any breathing disorder, please request to be seated as far away from the censor as possible. The smoking thurible will come down the aisle with the processional and at the Gospel.

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DECEMBER 2023

And she shall bring forth a Son and thou shall call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21 KJV

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Eucharistic Lectionary Year B Office Lectionary Year 2	Our Service Books: BCP—Book of Common Prayer BOS—Book of Occasional Services LFF—Lesser Feasts and Fasts The Hymnal 1982	<i>Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee, Blessed is Thou among women and blessed is the Fruit of Thy womb Jesus, for Thou hast brought unto us the Savior of our souls! Alleluia and Amen.</i>			1	2
3 First Advent 10:00 am Bible Study 11:00 am Holy Eucharist 12:00 Annual Meeting	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 2 nd Advent 10:00 am Bible Study 11:00 am Holy Eucharist 12:00 Noon Vestry Meets	11	12	13 Saint Lucy (Lucia) Martyr, 304 R	14 John of the Cross Mystic and Monastic Reformer 1591 W.	15	16
17 3 rd Advent Gaudete 10:00 am Bible Study 11:00 am Holy Eucharist	18	19	20 Ember Day	21 Saint Thomas The Apostle (Altar: Red)	22 Ember Day	23 Ember Day
24 4 th Advent No Morning Service today. Midnight Mass at 11:00 PM. No carol sing this year.	25 Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Christmas Day No Mass today	26 Saint Stephen Deacon and Martyr (Altar: Red)	27 Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist (Altar: White)	28 The Holy Innocents (Altar: Red)	29 Thomas Becket Archbishop of Canterbury and Martyr, 1170 R.	30
31 1 st Christmas 10:00 am Bible Study 11:00 am Mass						

December 3, 2023 (1st Advent)

Celebrant: Father Renegar
Eucharistic Minister: Lewis
Lector: Dick
Acolyte: Andrew
Altar Guild: Michele
Altar Color: Violet/Purple
1st Lesson: Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm: 80:1-7, 16-18
The Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
The Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

December 10, 2023 (2nd Advent)

Celebrant: Father Flanagan
Eucharistic Minister: Lewis
Lector: Charleen
Acolyte: Andrew
Altar Guild: Lewis
Altar Color: Violet/Purple
1st Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85 :1-2, 8-13
The Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
The Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

The Vestry will meet at 12:00 Noon, December 10th, immediately following Mass.

“God Bless Us everyone”—said Tiny Tim in a *Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens.

December 17, 2023 (Gaudete)

Celebrant: Father Flanagan
Eucharistic Minister: Lewis
Lector: Ruth
Acolyte: Andrew
Altar Guild: Michele
Altar Color: Violet (Purple)
1st Lesson : Isaiah 61 :1-4, 8-11
Psalm: 126
The Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
The Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24, 2023 (4th Advent)

THIS SUNDAY- MIDNIGHT MASS ONLY
Celebrant: Father Schnatterly
Eucharistic Minister: Lewis
Lector: Mary Anne
Acolytes: Andrew
Altar Guild: Lewis
Altar Color: Coronation
1st Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm: 96
The Epistle: Titus 2:11-14
The Gospel: Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

Excellent Bible Study with Hank every Sunday, 10:00 am, parish house. Great lessons and discussion. You are invited

The People that walked in darkness have seen a great light, Isaiah 9:2.

December 31, 2023 (1st Christmas)

Celebrant: Father Renegar
Eucharistic Minister: Lewis
Lector: Dick
Acolyte: Andrew
Altar Guild: Lewis
Altar Color: White
1st Lesson: Isaiah 61:10—62: 3
Psalm: 147
The Epistle: Galatians 3:23-25
The Gospel: John 1:1-18

Christmas Flowers

Many of you like to contribute to Christmas flowers for the Midnight Mass in memory of family and loved ones. Persons wishing to contribute should give your checks to the Altar Guild Chairman (Michele) in early December. Please include with your check your name and the name of the person or persons being remembered. Those acknowledgements will appear in the Midnight Mass bulletin. Thank you.

*What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring him a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
But what can I give him; I'll give him my heart.
Christina Rossetti, 1830-1894*

Trinity Episcopal Church

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Our Mission Statement:

Joyfully proclaiming the love of Christ in worship, outreach, welcome and care.

Our Bishop

The Right Reverend Daniel Paul Richards
The IX Bishop

Our Vicar:

The Vicariate is currently vacant.

The Vestry:

Cynthia Jefferies, Senior Warden (23)
Mary Lynn Lyle, Junior Warden (24)
Lewis Ashley (24)
Charleen Clark (25)
Ilona Anderson (23)
Dick Haldeman (25)

Parish Administrator and Registrar:

Dick Haldeman

Treasurer:

Ilona Anderson

Musicians:

John Pullin, Organist & Choirmaster
Lewis Ashley, Assistant Organist
Mary Anne Campbell, Cantor
Ruth Freeman, Cantor

Eucharistic Ministers:

Dick Haldeman
Lewis Ashley

Worship Leaders:

Dick Haldeman
Lewis Ashley
Cynthia Jefferies
Hank Baggett
Jennie Leverich

Altar Guild:

Michele Wells, Chairman
Myra Keith
Ruth Freeman
Lewis Ashley
Susanne Bender Heinzerling

Lectors (Lay Readers):

Dick Haldeman
Ruth Freeman
Mary Anne Campbell
Jennie Leverich
Charleen Clark

Acolytes:

Lewis Ashley
Andrew Hartsfield

Eucharistic Visitors:

Lewis Ashley
Hank Baggett
Cynthia Jefferies
Jennie Leverich

Greeters/Ushers

Ilona Anderson
Hank Baggett

Parish Historian:

May Hutchinson (In Memorium)

Children's Programs:

Jan Haldeman

Bulletins, Special Projects:

John Pullin

Sexton (Buildings & Grounds):

Buddy Wells

Diocesan Convention Delegation:

Lewis Ashley (voting)
Mike Clary (voting)
Cynthia Jefferies, Alternate
Dick Haldeman, Alternate

Newsletters:

Lewis Ashley

Sunday School/Bible Study:

Hank Baggett

For all who faithfully support this mission congregation, we give God thanks and praise

A Christmas Story

Old Matthias had lived 70-years in his small village in Bavaria. For all his life he had loved the Church and been a good Lutheran. On a snowy evening a few days before Christmas, in a dream he received a visitation from an angel who told him he would receive a visit from Jesus. Matthias was filled with joy and immediately began to make preparation. He baked fresh bread and bought cheese, meats and milk to set before the blessed Savior. He bought a good brand of tea and some extra firewood for the hearth. From a box in his closet he took out his most prized possession, an elegant fur cloak which he had never used. He would lay it on the chair near the fire and place it over the shoulders of his precious Lord. He even found a beautiful Christmas tree which he adorned with small white candles. By noon on Christmas Eve, all was in readiness. As he walked out into the deep snow on his way to the post office, he encountered a small boy who was shivering and appeared in distress. Matthias made an attempt to comfort the child and learned that he had two coins that had not been enough to buy bread and he had been turned away. His family had nothing to eat. Matthias took him to his house and packed the bread, meats, milk and cheese in a basket and then walked the child home with the food. He still had the wonderful tea for when Jesus came. That afternoon a knock came on the door. It must be Jesus thought Matthias as he hurried to open the door. No. It was a poor traveler who needed directions to get to the next village before dark. Matthias gave him some tea and a sandwich, and as the traveler stepped out into the cold, Matthias noticed that he had no coat and his pants were threadbare and he still had a long journey ahead. Matthias, somewhat reluctantly, picked up his fur cloak and placed it over the shoulders of the stranger and sent him on his way. Soon darkness came and the hour grew late and Jesus still had not come. When the old clock struck ten, Matthias left his cottage and trudged through the deep snow to the parish church to hear the midnight Mass. As he knelt in the candle light, he felt joyful, but wondered why Jesus had not come to see him as the angel had foretold. After the service, he walked back home and sat by the fire and soon drifted off into a

peaceful sleep. The angel once again appeared to him and Matthias told him how sad he was that he had not seen Jesus. "Oh, but you did see him," said the angel. "You saw him in the face of a cold, hungry child and you comforted and fed him. You met him again in the in the face of a poor traveler, and you gave him a warm cloak for his long journey. The Blessed Savior whom you have loved for so long, is well pleased with his visit with you." Old Matthias smiled a fell back into his peaceful sleep. The snow was still falling and the small white candles still twinkled on the small tree in the warm, cozy cottage. And somewhere in the far off distance- was it the voice of a choirboy or the voice of an angel? Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht, Alles schlaft: einsam wacht (Silent Night, Holy Night, All is calm, All is bright.) Like old Matthias, may you all have a joyous Christmas!

Farewells: Myra

On November 18th, we sadly bade a fond farewell to our dear friend and fellow traveler through this "veil of tears," Myra Keith. A long-time member of Trinity, Myra departed this life in her 92nd year. Myra was well known and loved for her steadfast faith, her caring spirit, her compassionate heart and her devotion to Trinity Church and its ministry to this community. Saint Francis once said: "preach the Gospel everyday and when necessary use words." The way Myra lived her life was an inspiration to us all. The last time we took Communion to Myra she was ill and very weak, but rallied her strength and loudly proclaimed her last recitement of the Lord's Prayer and the 23rd psalm. She stated at that time stated that she was looking forward to seeing Jesus face to face and hoped it would please Him to call her home soon. She has now beheld Him in His great Majesty and Glory and we are sure she smiled brightly when the Savior said well done, Myra, well done! Requiescat in Pace, Amen +.

The Carol Heard Around the World

Almost 200 years ago, the carol *Silent Night, Holy night* was heard for the first time in a village church in Oberndorf, Austria. While making preparations for the midnight mass, the choirmaster, Franz Gruber, found that the old church organ would no longer play. He went immediately to give the bad news to Father Mohr, the parish priest. The priest showed Gruber a copy of a new poem he had written and asked the choirmaster to compose a musical setting for the poem to be accompanied by guitar. On that Christmas Eve a song was born that has become the most widely sung Christmas carol in the world, *Silent Night, Holy Night*. You might like to remember this story as you are kneeling, holding your candle, and singing this carol at the conclusion of our midnight mass this year.