



December 2019

FROM OUR PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

THE REV. DR. ROB CAVANNA

Dates to Remember

Advent Theme: Rediscover Advent!

1	10am 1st Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist Guardian Angels Annual Meeting in the Parish Hall.
7	9am Women's Group, Parish Hall 10:30am to 1pm Advent Retreat for Men & Women.
8	10am 2nd Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist All Parish Adult/Family Forum: Great River Family Promise & Open Doors for Youth.
10	7pm Blue Christmas Community Wide Service
14	9:30am Book Club Brunch and Discussion.
15	10am 3rd Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist Vestry meets after coffee Fellowship. Sweet Shoppe.
22	10am Advent Festival of Lessons & Music. 4th Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist
24	4pm and 8pm Festive Choral Candlelight Eucharist
25	No services today. Have a Blessed and Happy Christmas! Drive safely!
29	10 am, New Year Celebration and 1st Sunday after Christmas

How to Reach Us

Address	1326 4th St. PO Box 65 Elk River, MN 55330
Office Hours	Tues/Wed/Thurs 10:00am-3:00pm
Fr Rob's Office Hours	Wednesday 10:00am-12:00pm
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Facebook	www.facebook.com/ HolyTrinityElkRiver

I'm Happy New Church Year! The new Church Year begins on Sunday, December 1, 2019, with the celebration of The First Sunday of Advent and switching from Year C to Year A in the RCL (Revised Common Lectionary). These are the scripture readings we use along with many other mainline denominations.

We had one In-Gathering of Pledge Cards on Sunday, November 24, 2019 and we will have another on Sunday, December 1, 2019. Your generous response to our Pledge Drive this year of Shining Our Light is commendable. Thank you so very much. If you still **haven't pledged, please prayerfully consider doing so as this will help us continue to "shine Christ's light and love"** in the many ministries and programs we offer all year long. Operational expenses, staff compensation and maintenance costs continue to increase each year as your own personal expenses. Again thank you for your past generous financial support and for **your 2020 Pledge. With it we're able to build a more realistic budget as well as pay the every day expenses of being a viable, vibrant and responsive faith community.**

November was a very busy month. We celebrated All Saints Sunday on November 3, 2019 as well as opening our Stewardship Month with its theme, Shining Our Light, on that Sunday too. The Annual Holiday Bazaar was once again a success due to the **hard work of the Women's Group as well as help and support from many, many others of our faith community.** The North Star Boys' Choir enhanced our Eucharistic liturgy on Sunday, November 10, 2019. Their melodious and almost heavenly voices bring a unique dimension to our Sunday worship. On Sunday, November 24, 2019, we held an Adult Forum on Safe Church and Emergency Management with Sarah Barnett, Missioner at ECMN and Fr. Tim Kingsley, an expert in church security, safety and protection. A very frank and candid discussion took place around keys, background checks and policies related to them.

Advent and the new Church Year begins on Sunday, December 1, 2019. I think we need to rediscover Advent which I believe gets lost to all the consumerism and many distractions of our secular culture. **For that reason I'd like to focus this month on the meaning of the season and what it should mean to us as Episcopal Christians.**

As the culture of the Church is eroded by the rampant materialism and consumerism of our secular society and as Christmas becomes for many people a secular holiday that begins at Thanksgiving

(at the end of November in the U.S.) and comes to an end shortly after dinner on December 25th, it becomes more and more difficult to observe the season of Advent with any integrity, even within the Church.

Christmas concerts, Christmas parties, even Christmas Services of Lessons and Carols are held from early December on building to an almost anti-climactic series of services on December 24th and 25th. Those who insist on waiting to celebrate Christmas when it actually arrives are regarded as dreary pedants who are simply out-of-step with reality or insensitive to the feelings of those who prefer to follow their own traditions rather than the ancient cadences of the Church year. Although they have a high view of the faith and the feast, they are often dismissed as modern day Ebenezer Scrooges, who thought Christmas was humbug and did not even care that Advent existed.

Sadly, much is lost in this popular reordering of the Church year. In fact, Christmas itself is impoverished. The Church has appointed twelve days for the celebration of Christmas, from December 25th through January 5th. Those days include important feasts, including St. Stephen the first martyr, St. John the Evangelist, the Holy Innocents, and the Holy Name, which help to illuminate more fully the meaning of Christmas.

If the celebration of Christmas ends after dinner on December 25th, we lose those great days and the mysteries they unfold. Moreover, by celebrating Christmas from the **beginning of December on we override Advent and lose it. And this is a terrible loss! Don't** you think? Advent sets before us the powerful unfolding of God's plan for all of history, a plan that culminates not in the first coming of Christ but in his Second Coming.

Without Advent, Christmas is all too easily reduced to a sentimental story about a baby, and even Good Friday and Easter are in danger of losing their meaning. Christmas is the celebration of the mystery of the divine Redeemer who dwelt among us on earth. But he is truly the Redeemer only if he comes again to judge the world and establish forever his new creation.

Pascha, *i.e.*, Good Friday and Easter, is the celebration of the mystery of the divine King who reigns from the Cross and rises from the dead on the third day. But he is truly the King only if he ascends the throne prepared for him by his Father from the beginning of time, the throne of his eternal Kingdom which will not be fully realized until the end of time.

When Advent is swamped and washed away by the premature celebration of Christmas, we lose something more: we lose the gifts of expectation and anticipation. Modern western society is a culture of instant gratification! We are unwilling to wait for anything and in refusing to wait we also lose much of the value of the thing desired. If we can have anything we want, whenever we want it, everything is cheapened and nothing is of much value. On the other hand, waiting patiently gives us an opportunity to reflect on the meaning and value of the things we desire. Indeed, it enhances the value of those things, for nothing is more valuable than the thing that is out of reach and few possessions are more prized than the ones for which we have longed and waited. Furthermore, the truth is that, in spite of our desire for instant gratification, and in spite of the fact that we live in a time of abundance of every sort, we cannot always have what we want or, more importantly, what we need. And in such circumstances, what we need more than anything else is hope.

In C.S. Lewis's Narnia, it was always winter but never Christmas before the return of Aslan. It was, in certain ways, a very unhappy time, but it was also a time in which

the citizens of Narnia found that they could survive, if only they could hold on to their faith, with the *hope* that Aslan would return someday.

Hope nurtures faith in a way that instant gratification never can. Had it been the other way around, *always Christmas*, a time of unending gift-giving and continual parties, faith, as well as hope, would have been in jeopardy. For when a time of darkness or danger returned, no one would have been prepared to deal with it, no one would have had the inner resources to face it. As Saint Paul writes, "we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope." (*Romans 5:3-4*)

Advent is the Church's time of learning to live through the darkness, learning to grow in the hope that sustains faith. Rediscovering Advent thus becomes a project of the greatest importance.

The season of Advent looks back, to a time before the birth of Christ, to show us how the people of God learned hope in ancient times. Then the season of Advent looks forward, far beyond the birth of Christ, to the true object of our faith, the King who comes to conquer the darkness, restore creation, and establish his Kingdom for ever.

We see in the stories of ancient Israel and in the writings of the prophets a world very much like our own, a world of people rebelling against God and finding themselves lost in darkness again and again. The prophets also show how God has a plan not only for his people Israel but for the whole world--a plan that extends beyond the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. The coming of the Messiah then, at a remarkable moment of peace in the ancient world, was not the completion of God's plan. Nevertheless, it was the turning point, the critical sign which assures us that there is reason to hope.

And so, in Advent we recall the ancient prophecies and signs which led to the birth of the Messiah, and we look forward in hope, applying those same prophecies and signs to the world in which we live, in hope and faithful anticipation that the same Messiah, Jesus Christ, will come again as he promised.

We can't hope to reverse the commercial hijacking and premature celebration

of Christmas which has played a major role in the near demise of Advent, so we should not waste our time trying! What we can do is rededicate ourselves to the observance of Advent in our churches and in our homes. Through the years the Church has developed many resources for this so we do not need to reinvent Advent. We just need to rediscover it! Pray that you, I and our youth do so this year.

We will try to do just that in our Sunday worship all the four Sundays of Advent and **in our reading of Bishop Mariann Budde's book, Receiving Jesus: The Way of Love.** An Advent Quiet Half-Day for Men and Women will be offered on Saturday, December 7, 2019, from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm. Please consider participating as it **should help you "rediscover Advent and yourself!"**

Don't forget that we will have an Advent Festival of Lessons and Music for our pageant this year and that we will have two Christmas Eve Services this year on December 24, 2019, at 4:00 and 8:00 pm. Many of you were unable to attend the Christmas Eve service we held at 5:00 pm in the past. The Vestry and I hope that **these two services will give you an option that you didn't have in the past** – an earlier and later service!

Sincere wishes and prayers for a very rewarding and meaningful Advent. May it be for you and your family a time of anticipation and expectation! May the Christ Child

bless each of you and may God bring you hope, peace and joy! We have truly been blessed as we continue to attract and draw new members to the Body of Christ at Holy Trinity! We give thanks for each of them and their families.

Thank you for everything – your stewardship of time, talent and treasure! Jesus loves you and stay well, be good of heart, and let go, let God! Have an enriched and rediscovered Advent and a Blessed Christmas season!

Your servant in Christ,
Fr. Rob+

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY AT HOLY TRINITY

In early November, Father Rob blessed two prayer shawls which were distributed to members of the congregation privately. While this is a new practice for Holy Trinity, many other Episcopal Churches lead us in undertaking this ministry. We are working to adapt their best practices for this congregation. While the ministry was introduced **at a Women's Group Meeting**, participation is open to all. The ministry is a part of Pastoral Care, as managed by Father Rob, Deacon Georgia, and Sandy Sisson for the Vestry.



Prayer Shawls are an ancient institution, used by the early Hebrews. Traditionally shawls symbolized shelter, peace, and spiritual sustenance. A more ecumenical modern ministry using the shawls was started in 1998 as a grass roots movement which has grown into an international cause offering patterns and prayers for use in the process. The only stipulation from that group is that the shawls are freely given and never sold.

Shawls are generally knit or crocheted by parishioners who pray for a specific person for whom the shawl is intended or for the congregation as they work on the shawl. Once finished, the shawls are blessed and given to recipients as a tangible extension of the love of the congregation. They are especially meaningful for those who are unable to be with us in worship for health reasons. Several of us have stories surrounding the comfort a shawl has brought to different relatives and friends.

While we call them shawls, they can take many shapes. Some are truly what we think of as a shawl, some are more small afghans for laps or shoulders. Some congregations also make small pieces designed to be held in the hand as someone prays. They are not gender specific, although designs and colors may trend that way. The group at Holy Trinity is working to make shawls in all colors, to provide for all who need them. If you know anyone in our extended family who could benefit from a shawl, please let Fr Rob, Deacon Georgia, Sandy or a member of the group know.

The ministry is just getting started, with a few shawls finished and two presented. We would like to get to the stage that all who would benefit from the connection to **our congregation have them and we have some "in reserve" as new needs arise.** We are starting to meet as a group to pray, work on our shawls and share ideas, expertise, and fellowship. Look for more regular meeting starting in the new year. We will try to meet at least once monthly during a weekday and once monthly on a Saturday. We have the patterns and ideas to share with anyone who would like to join us or work independently. If you are interested, please contact Mary Brugger.

I want to thank all of you who have pledged for the new calendar year 2020. Thank you for your financial support and thank you also for the stewardship of your time and talents. Your financial commitment enables us to continue to build "beloved community" at Holy Trinity.

As a "beloved community" we strive to grow every day to be reconcilers, justice-makers and healers in the name of Christ. "Feel the Love" isn't just a slogan we use but one we try to live into every Sunday and every day of our lives.

If you forgot your Pledge card or to pledge, please complete a card and put it in next Sunday's offering.

Your generosity is very much appreciated as well as your involvement in the many ministries in which we shine not only our light but the light of Christ.

Sincerely with the Grace of God,
Sue Nagorski



Holy Trinity Happenings - Advent

- Dec 1st 10:00am 1st Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist and Sunday School. Coffee Fellowship follows in the Parish Hall. Guardian Angels Annual Meeting follows the Eucharist in the Parish Hall.
- Dec 7th 9:00am **Women's Group**, Parish Hall
10:30am to 1:00pm Advent Retreat for Men and Women. Please sign up.
- Dec 8th 10:00am 2nd Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist and Sunday School. Coffee Fellowship follows in the Parish Hall. All Parish Adult/Family Forum on Great River Family Promise and Open Doors for Youth.
- Dec 10th 7:00pm Blue Christmas Community Wide Service.
- Dec 14th 9:30am Book Club Brunch and Discussion.
- Dec 15th 10:00am 3rd Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist and Sunday School. Coffee Fellowship follows in the Parish Hall. Vestry meets after coffee Fellowship.
- Dec 22nd 10:00am 4th Sunday of Advent, Holy Eucharist and Sunday School. Advent Festival of Lessons and Music.
- Dec 24th Festive Choral Candlelight Eucharist, 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm
- Dec. 25th No services today! Have a Blessed and Happy Christmas! Drive safely!



Hello, Holy Trinity

Advent is here! May we all seek time in our waiting to spend time with the One who loves and grounds us in new and fulfilling ways. And may the time we have with those whose lives are linked with ours be life-giving.

December holds many things for all of us. I am looking forward to sharing it with you!

December 1st is the Guardian Angels Meeting. Looking forward to hearing how this beloved community ministry is growing.

December 8th we welcome Great River Family Promise and Open Doors for Youth to conduct a Forum following service. I invite all of you to come hear of opportunities to partner with these ministries that are serving the homeless in our communities.

I am looking forward, and already hard at work on, a homily for our December 10th Blue Christmas service. The holidays are such a mix of joy and pain more so to some than others, and I am grateful that we take the time for those in our community who are experiencing loss. This service helps us to be present to the hurting among us.

December 14th is Book Club Brunch from 9:30 to 11. We are reviewing Marriann Edgar Budde's book: Receiving Jesus: The Way of Love. I encourage all of you to read it and come!! It is a short book full of encouraging stories and challenges to accompany us along our path, no matter where we find ourselves. We hope to follow this up with practical meditations options to carry it deeper in the new year.

I ask for your prayers as I continue to navigate the new in my vocational life.

Best regards,
Deacon Georgia



ADVENT CONSPIRACY

Advent Conspiracy is not a formula. It is the radical story of a God who entered into our world to make things right. When we begin to grasp what that truly means, it changes everything—the way we **worship**, the way we **spend**, the way we **give**, and the way we **love**.

Below are real stories and tips from conspirators around the world. Take them as inspiration but ultimately it is up to each of us to make the

Advent Conspiracy is a powerful reminder of who we are called to be as followers of Jesus.

#MYACSTORY

I paid for Christmas in cash this year. I did not go into debt to buy gifts. Instead I spent wisely and gave relationally.

#MYACSTORY

My small church family raised over \$30,000 to give away to those in need. That is amazing!

#MYACSTORY

Our small group has a special dinner in December where we each invite a new friend of couple to attend. It's a fun way to show hospitality and love to others in the community.

#MYACSTORY

Do you have a story you want to share? Email us at info@adventconspiracy.org



Special Blessings to all our
December Birthday Trinitarians!

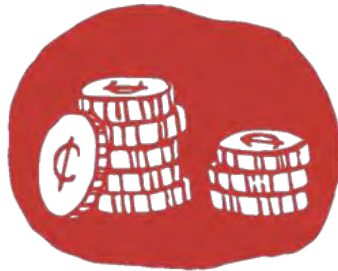
01 – Mariatu Andersen 12 – Holly Goodwin
02 – Camden Marquette 18 – Matt Krogman
05 – Jackson Stewart 30 – Emily Stutler
11 – Julie Raitz 31 – Ginny Anderson
12 – Carol Weber



WORSHIP FULLY
Christmas begins and
ends with Jesus.

SPEND LESS

Free up your
resources to support
things that truly
matter.



GIVE MORE

Give more
intentionally and
relationally.



LOVE ALL

Radically love others
like Jesus did.



Altar Guild

Gail Weber
612-850-4250

Meals on Wheels

Call or see
Cheryl Ecklund
763-443-8637

Great River
Family Promise

Deb Krogman
763-225-7773

Senior Choir
& Contemporary
Ensemble Singers
& Musicians

Call or see Bea Bastyr
763-441-4068

Chalice Bearers/
Acolytes

Contact the Church office

Feed My Starving
Children

Entire parish
Contact the Church Office

Women's Group

Call or see:
Linda Krieger 763-441-7072
Kate Hansen 763-441-6061

Men's Group

Call or see Ben Bastyr
763.441.4068

Feast Days in December

6th Nicholas, Bishop of Myra
21st St Thomas, Apostle
26th St Stephen, Deacon and
Martyr
27th St. John, Apostle and
Evangelist
28th Holy Innocents

Looking Ahead: January

Jan 1 The Holy Name of Jesus
Jan 6 The Epiphany
Jan 18 The Confession of
St. Peter the Apostle
Jan 25 The Confession of
St. Paul the Apostle



HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ministry Rota

If you are unable to fill your volunteer position,
please make your own substitution and leave word
with the office. ~ ~ Thank you! ~ ~

Ministry:	Dec. 1, 2019	Dec. 8, 2019	Dec. 15, 2019	Dec. 22, 2019	Christmas Eve 4pm	Christmas Eve 8pm	Dec. 29, 2019
Greeter:	Dick Anderson	Ginny Anderson	Dan Krieger	Deb Krogman	Jane Lindenfelser	Ann Wedl	Marilyn Bina
Child Care:	Jackson Stewart	Vernis Campbell	Jackson Stewart	Jackson Stewart			Vernis Campbell
Usher:	Adrian Russell	Ben Bastyr	Larry Brugger	Gary Wedl	Dan Krieger	Dave Raitz	Ben Bastyr
Acolyte:	Wiltie Russel	Deb Krogman	Jon Lloyd	Daryl Herrmann	Deb Krogman	Jon Lloyd	Deb Krogman
1 st Reader:	Daryl Herrmann	Mary Dare	Mary Brugger	Ken Schultz	Larry Brugger	Mary Dare	Marion Marshall
2 nd Reader:	Mary Brugger	Eric Hawkins	Marion Marshall	Gail Weber	Daryl Herrmann	Eric Hawkins	Mary Brugger
Prayers:	Sue Nagorski	Marion Marshall	Sue Nagorski	Jane Lindenfelser	Marion Marshall	Sue Nagorski	Jane Lindenfelser
Chalice 1:	Julie Raitz	Mary Dare	Molly Liberto	Jane Lindenfelser	Julie Raitz	Linda Krieger	
Chalice 2:	Jane Lindenfelser	Linda Krieger	Larry Brugger	Scott Svoboda	Mary Dare	Larry Brugger	Jane Lindenfelser
Counter:	Deb Krogman	Ann Wedl	Jennifer Warner	Mary Brugger	Linda Krieger	Larry Brugger	Jeff Nagorski
Coffee:	Bea & Ben Bastyr	Mary Dare	Julie and Dave Raitz	Molly Liberto and Jeanne Simonsen			Molly Liberto and Jeanne Simonsen



Our Mission Statement

Holy Trinity is a diverse, multi-cultural, growing, dynamic faith community rich in liturgy and music that serves Christ in all persons and does God's work in the world.

HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH			HTEC VESTRY MEMBERS		
Priest-in-Charge:	Fr. Rob Cavanna	320-339-4852	Senior Warden:	Sue Nagorski	612-868-9263 C
Deacon:	The Rev. Georgia Steele	651-338-2946	Junior Warden:	Gary Wedl	763-427-0776
Parish Admin:	Jen Haag	612-685-6139	Service:	Dick Anderson	612-812-2581 C
Director of Music:	Bea Bastyr	763-441-4068	Liturgy:	Daryl Herrmann	269-580-9040
Head Usher:	Dan Krieger	763-441-7072	Education:	Molly Liberto	763-742-2692 H
Altar Guild Chair:	Gail Weber	612-850-4250	Evangelism:	Nancy Lloyd	763-370-9598 C
Women's Group Co-Chairs:	Linda Krieger Kate Hansen	763-441-7072 763-441-6061	Pastoral Care:	Sandy Sisson	763-267-7623
Men's Group Chair:	Ben Bastyr	763-441-4068	Treasurer:	Jeff Nagorski	763-234-5000 C
Youth/Sunday School:	Molly Liberto	763-742-2692	Vestry Clerk:	Joyce LeClaire	763-263-7740 C

December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00am First Sunday of Advent Guardian Angels Annual Meeting follows in the Parish Hall. 	2	3	4 10am-12pm Fr. Rob's office hours and Fr. Rob by appointment.	5 6:30pm Contemporary Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal.	6 Nicholas Bishop of Myra 	7 9:00am Women's Group, Parish Hall. 10:30am to 1:00pm Advent Retreat for Men and Women.
8 10:00am Second Sunday of Advent All Parish Adult/Family Forum on Great River Family Promise and Open Doors for Youth 	9	10 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Community Gathering Service of Solace & Comfort. 	11 10am-12pm Fr. Rob's office hours and Fr. Rob by appointment.	12 6:30pm Contemporary Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal.	13	14 9:30am Book Club Brunch and Discussion. 
15 10:00am Third Sunday of Advent Sweet Shoppe Vestry meets after coffee Fellowship. 	16	17	18 10am-12pm Fr. Rob's office hours and Fr. Rob by appointment.	19 6:30pm Contemporary Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal.	20	21 St Thomas, Apostle
22 10:00am Advent Festival of Lessons and Music Fourth Sunday of Advent	23	24 Christmas Eve Festive Candlelight Service and Holy Eucharist 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm	25 No services today! Merry Christmas! 	26 St Stephen, Deacon and Martyr	27 St John, Apostle and Evangelist	28
29 10:00am First Sunday after Christmas New Year Celebration.	30	31	Have a Holy Advent and a safe, Happy and Blessed New Year!			<i>Every Sunday:</i> 10:00 Holy Eucharist and Sunday School 11:20 Coffee Fellowship

MAKING
CHRISTMAS
MEANINGFUL
 (AGAIN)

